

A. Introduction

1. What did you do this summer?

2. When Israel was told to go, they went! <sup>A</sup>

B. Another Passover was near

1. Fifteen centuries later <sup>B</sup>

2. Jesus: what kind of King? <sup>C</sup>

C. Manna and God’s Bread

1. Look again back to Israel <sup>D</sup>

2. Jesus applies a lesson from history <sup>E</sup>

D. Conclusion

1. The Lord’s Table <sup>F</sup>

2. We need to be reminded <sup>G</sup>

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<sup>A</sup> Exodus 12:34

<sup>B</sup> Matthew 14:15, John 6:2-4, 14-15

<sup>C</sup> John 18:36-37

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<sup>D</sup> Psalm 114:8, Exodus 16:2-3, 14-15

<sup>E</sup> John 6:26-27, 29; Mark 6:34, Isaiah 11:10

<sup>F</sup> John 6:40

<sup>G</sup> Numbers 11:4-6, Psalm 106:15, 2 Peter 1:3

A. Introduction

1. What did you do this summer?

- a. that will be the question that many of you will ask friends as you see them again for the first time after perhaps quite a number of weeks
- b. school resumes on Tuesday, meaning for many, vacations are ended
- c. some may have visited relatives
- d. others stayed at a cottage
- e. some even stayed at home
- f. perhaps you went camping – that is something that Maureen and I and the kids did a lot: to the east coast and to the west coast a number of times with varying numbers and ages of children
- g. whatever vacation you have, there is always a certain amount of planning – especially so if you are going camping
  - (A) what campground (s)?
  - (B) are the camper, tents, sleeping bags, canoe all ready? and food?
  - (C) fortunately for us, Maureen looked after the food – how much food can you pack into a VW camper; then a Ford Econoline van; then a passenger van; finally a piggy-back camper on a pick-up
  - (D) it always had to be a lot for a growing family
- h. so, it's not something that you decide to do one morning and then leave that night – at least, not unless  
...

2. You Are Israel & God Tells You To Do So

- a. it was the greatest event in OT history for Israel
- b. it was a time filled with miracles, signs and wonders
- c. it was a cause for constant reflection in later days: by Moses, by the Psalm-writers, by the prophets – of how God had worked wonders in delivering them from Egypt
- d. and after God's last plague, the death of the first-born, Pharaoh rose in the middle of the night and at last gave them permission – ordered them – to depart from the land
- e. this was the night of the first Passover

- f. 'So the people took their dough before it was leavened, with their kneading bowls bound up in the clothes on their shoulders.' (Exodus 12:34) – that is not a lot of food to take with them – God had provided that they have a lamb supper the preceding evening
- g. Six hundred thousand men; their wives; their seniors; their children – it makes the fifty thousand who returned from the Babylonian captivity pale in comparison – carrying everything they owned, including some of what the Egyptians had once owned and headed off into the desert
- h. and set off across the barren wilderness – how would they survive?

## B. Another Passover Was Approaching

### 1. Fifteen Centuries Later

- a. '2 A large crowd followed Him, because they saw the signs which He was performing on those who were sick. 3 Then Jesus went up on the mountain, and there He sat down with His disciples. 4 Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was near.' (John 6:2-4)
- b. later on John tells us that there were five thousand men in this crowd, and Matthew informs us that there were also women and children
- c. '... This place is desolate and the hour is already late; ...' (Matthew 14:15) and in their eagerness to hear Christ's words, to see His miracles, they had not come prepared
- d. except for one lad, prepared to give up his five barley loaves and two fish (there's a sermon in miniature in the unnamed lad, isn't there?)
- e. so the multitude was fed, and twelve baskets of remnants gathered
- f. '14 Therefore when the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, "This is truly the Prophet who is to come into the world." 15 So Jesus, perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone.' (John 6:14-15)
- g. and our Scripture reading covered the events of the next day

### 2. Jesus Was To Be King

- a. but not in the way that these people understood
- b. at his judgement, 'Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting so that I would not be handed over to the Jews; but as it is, My

kingdom is not of this realm.” (John 18:36)

- c. upon this, ‘Therefore Pilate said to Him, “So You are a king?” Jesus answered, “You say correctly that I am a king. For this I have been born, and for this I have come into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth hears My voice.”’ (John 18:37)

## C. Manna and God’s Bread

### 1. Let’s Return to Those Israelites

- a. there they are, probably at least two million of them, heading into the wilderness on what would turn out to be a forty-year camping trip – if they had listened to and obeyed God it would have only been about a year, but that was not to be
- b. a limited amount of food – ill-prepared; except: God was with them
- c. and, what about water?
- d. the first part of their path was one that was traced by General Allenby<sup>{2}</sup> in 1917 who spent a year to fight across the Sinai Peninsula, driving the Turkish forces back over 150 miles of desert. At one point Allenby made a military coup by feigning attack on Gaza but in reality going to capture Beersheba and its precious wells (dug four millennia before by Abraham). There they loaded 30,000 camels with 15-gallon water tanks slung on the camels’ sides. Pressing on to capture Sheria the army outdistanced and got separated from their water train.
- e. Major Gilbert describes their predicament as they ran out of water:<sup>{3}</sup> ‘... our tongues began to swell so that they seemed to fill the insides of our mouths, which had gone dry. It was with difficulty that we could speak. Then our lips commence to swell; they turned a purplish black and burst; sand blew in the open cuts and flies ... driving us almost mad.’
- f. but the Lord provided for His people
- g. in commemorating the flight from Egypt, Psalm 114:8 describes ‘(the God of Jacob), Who turned the rock into a pool of water, the flint into a fountain of water.’
- h. and for bread – the Israelites had just been miraculously led across the Red Sea. Then, Exodus 16:2-3 – ‘2 The whole congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. 3 The sons of Israel said to them, “Would that we had died by the Lord’s hand in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat, when we ate bread to the full; for you have brought us out into this

wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”

- i. so, that evening God fed them with quails, and in the morning they rose and `14 ... on the surface of the wilderness there was a fine flake-like thing, fine as the frost on the ground. 15 When the sons of Israel saw it, they said to one another, “What is it?” (“Manna?”) For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, “It is the bread which the Lord has given you to eat.” (Exodus 16:14-15)

## 2. Jesus Applies the History Lesson

- a. Jesus is now across the Sea of Galilee near Capernaum and the crowd has followed them there, and He sees their motivation
- b. `Jesus answered them and said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled.” (John 6:26) – their attraction is physical, not spiritual
- c. in the wilderness, the Israelites first concern was for their physical need which they often expressed in unreasonable terms – ‘too bad we did not die in Egypt rather than having to die here!’
- d. Jesus turns their minds, and ours, to the greater need of mankind: ‘Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the food which endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His seal.’ (John 6:27)
  - (A) yes, Jesus had filled them on the previous day with food to meet their physical need, but He had first seen a greater need:
  - (B) `... He felt compassion for them because they were like sheep without a shepherd; and He began to teach them many things.’ (Mark 6:34) – the purpose of signs was to confirm His teaching
  - (C) a teaching that was spiritual food, which taken into the heart brings eternal life – this was the real food that Jesus, the Son of Man could provide; and that He would provide; so He said,
  - (D) `... This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.’ (John 6:29) – if a person would but believe in Him
- e. the Jews want a sign – the feeding of the 5,000 was insufficient – Moses, they said, had fed millions; and had done so by the manna falling from heaven: ‘Now, Jesus, give us such a sign from heaven!’
- f. but says Jesus, ‘there are flaws in your demands of a sign from me’
  - (A) it wasn’t Moses who gave the bread out of heaven, but God
  - (B) nor was that manna, which God gave – not Moses – the true and lasting bread – in fact it rotted

when Israelites tried to store it up

- (C) moreover the true bread does not just give food to 5,000 for a momentary need, but rather life to the world (not just Israel!)
- (D) and finally: Jesus, does not simply give a sign; He is the Sign
- (E) He is *'... the root of Jesse, Who will stand as a signal (or, banner) for the peoples; And His resting place will be glorious.'* (Isaiah 11:10)
- (F) Jesus not only gives bread: He is the Bread; He is the Bread of Life
- g. God provided the Israelites throughout their wilderness wanderings, all 40 years of them, with bread and water – the necessities of life
- h. God in Christ provides those who will believe in Jesus as Saviour with the Bread of Life, so that the promise in John 6:35 is that on this earthly pilgrimage they will not hunger, they will never thirst.

#### D. Conclusion

##### 1. The Lord's Table

- a. is a memorial, a continuing and repeated reminder to us who are so quick to forget and so slow to remember, that it is the Lord, Jesus Christ who is the Bread of Life, the One giving us life and sustaining us through our days here on earth and forever in heaven
- b. the reminder, in various ways, that Jesus said, *'For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.'* (John 6:40)

##### 2. We Need Reminding

- a. it was in that year immediately following the exodus from Egypt, that *'4 ... the sons of Israel wept again and said, "Who will give us meat to eat? 5 We remember the fish which we used to eat free in Egypt, the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic, 6 but now our appetite is gone. There is nothing at all to look at except this manna."'* (Numbers 11:4-6)
- b. so the Lord gave them meat to eat: not just for one evening as before, but for an entire month, and as the AV translates it so graphically, *'And he gave them their request; but sent leanness into their soul.'* (Psalms 106:15 AV)

- c. Forgive us O Lord, for those times when we desire to go back to the flesh pots of Egypt, to return to the world, forgetting our Bread of Life, Jesus our Lord, 'seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence.' (2 Peter 1:3)

## E. End Notes

1. © 2013 by Garth Hutchinson, Faith Fellowship Baptist Church of Aurora (Ontario): may be distributed or quoted freely, only let this be done to the glory "of the great God and our Saviour, Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13).
2. As recounted by Major Vivian Gilbert in '*The Romance of the Last Crusade,*' pp. 77ff; D, Appleton and Company, 1923
3. *ibid, page 91*