

Congregational handout; outline sermon text on following pages
Sermon Notes & References

“Bread & Water” Miracles
John 6:1-24

April 17, 2016

- A. For this history in the other gospels see
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1 After these things Jesus went away to the other side of the Sea of Galilee (or Tiberias). 2 And a great multitude was following Him, because they were seeing the signs which He was performing on those who were sick. 3 And Jesus went up on the mountain, and there He sat with His disciples. 4 Now the Passover, the feast of the Jews, was at hand. 5 Jesus therefore lifting up His eyes, and seeing that a great multitude was coming to Him, *said to Philip, “Where are we to buy bread, that these may eat?” 6 And this He was saying to test him; for He Himself knew what He was intending to do. 7 Philip answered Him, “Two hundred denarii worth of bread is not sufficient for them, for everyone to receive a little.” 8 One of His disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, *said to Him, 9 “There is a lad here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are these for so many people?” 10 Jesus said, “Have the people sit down.” Now there was much grass in the place. So the men sat down, in number about five thousand. 11 Jesus therefore took the loaves; and having given thanks, He distributed to those who were seated; likewise also of the fish as much as they wanted. 12 And when they were filled, He *said to His disciples, “Gather up the leftover fragments that nothing may be lost.” 13 And so they gathered them up, and filled twelve baskets with fragments from the five barley loaves, which were left over by those who had eaten. 14 When therefore the people saw the sign which He had performed, they said, “This is of a truth the Prophet who is to come into the world.”

15 Jesus therefore perceiving that they were intending to come and take Him by force, to make Him king, withdrew again to the mountain by Himself alone. 16 Now when evening came, His disciples went down to the sea, 17 and after getting into a boat, they *started to* cross the sea to Capernaum. And it had already become dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. 18 And the sea *began* to be stirred up because a strong wind was blowing. 19 When therefore they had rowed about three or four miles, they *beheld Jesus walking on the sea and drawing near to the boat; and they were frightened. 20 But He *said to them, “It is I; do not be afraid.” 21 They were willing therefore to receive Him into the boat; and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going.

22 The next day the multitude that stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was no other small boat there, except one, and that Jesus had not entered with His disciples into the boat, but *that* His disciples had gone away alone. 23 There came other small boats from Tiberias near to the place where they ate the bread after the Lord had given thanks. 24 When the multitude therefore saw that Jesus was not there, nor His disciples, they themselves got into the small boats, and came to Capernaum, seeking Jesus. (NAS)

A. Introduction

1. The Title

- a. is a little bit of whimsy

- (A) being sent to bed with this for supper was a punishment
- (B) but it was also food for very poor families at one time
- b. perhaps it could be "Bread, Fish & Water"
- c. This story is so familiar I hardly will need to repeat it after reading it

2. The Time

- a. We are about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the way through John
- b. But this is the time of the Passover
- c. So these event took place about $\frac{2}{3}$ of the way through His ministry
- d. And it was then only a year away from the Cross
- e. Now Jesus is preparing His disciples for that event
- f. Just as He also is preparing them for the teaching later in this chapter

3. The Place

- a. Mark – and we shall not do a thorough study of all of the details of these events, but I leave that to you – tells us that the twelve disciples were fatigued when they came back from their own tour of ministry
- b. 'And He *said to them, "Come away by yourselves to a lonely place and rest a while." (For there were many people coming and going, and they did not even have time to eat.)' (Mark 6:31)
- c. it was during this time of rest that Jesus & His disciples were followed by the multitudes, because they had seen the miracles he was doing – specifically to those whose sickness was shown in a lack of strength
- d. it is somewhat difficult to map out their journey over these two days, because of multiple cities with the same name, and all the popular traditions that have grown up in the last two millennia about places in the Holy Land, but the general picture is
 - (A) the feeding of the 5000 took place on the eastern or north-eastern side of the Sea of Galilee, near a city called Bethsaida
 - (B) the disciples were returning in the night to Capernaum which is on the west side of the Sea of Galilee, in the land of Gennesaret
 - (C) (Sea of Galilee also called Cinnereth, Gennesaret & Tiberias)

B. Four Individuals

1. Jesus

- a. Jesus took the initiative

- b. In the other gospels we find the disciples seeing the need of the people but prepared to send them away
- c. Jesus not only saw their need but took steps to meet that need
- d. every step Jesus took, He did in the will of God
 - (A) the conversation with Nicodemus
 - (B) the conversation with the woman at the well
 - (C) here, He knew what He was about to do
- e. His question to Philip is a test, not a seeking for information

2. Philip

- a. the other gospels tell how Jesus instructed his disciples to feed them
- b. only John tells us it was Philip who estimated the cost at 200 pence
- c. figure it out for yourself how much it would cost to feed this many
- d. Philip's estimate was over ½ a year's working man's wages
- e. but Philip was approaching this as problem solver
 - (A) he was concentrating on the immensity of the problem
 - (B) not looking at the immensity of his Lord

3. Andrew

- a. Andrew was the disciple who brought to Jesus
 - (A) it was he who brought his brother Simon Peter
 - (B) it was he who brought a source of food
- b. only John names Andrew as being that instrument here
- c. it is alert Andrew who does something, even a little thing
- d. but he also brings a limited vision – what are these for so many?

4. The Lad

- a. his mother had packed him a reasonable lunch
- b. it was enough for him, but not much more
- c. did Andrew spot him in the crowd and go to commandeer his lunch – I think not!
- d. this lad seems to have volunteered his lunch – ready to help if even in a very small way
- e. Andrew must have looked friendly – approachable – to this lad
 - (A) that this fishermen would not scorn his offering

- (B) that the lad was willing to bestow his lunch into his hands
- f. how this boy's eyes were going to be opened that day

C. The Feeding of the Multitude – a Public Sign

1. the Thanksgiving

a. can you envision this?

- (A) 5,000 hungry men plus wives and children strewn across the mountain-side
- (B) Jesus, standing before them, preparing to feed them
- (C) and, as was His custom the gave thanks to God for this food
- (D) all the while bearing before him
 - (1) 5 small barley loaves, and 2 small fish
 - (2) enough for a small boy's lunch

b. "little is much when God is in it, Labour not for wealth or fame; There's a crown – and you can win it, If you'll go in Jesus' name."—{2}.

- (A) Jesus' thanksgiving was not simply for what He held
- (B) but for what God would do with what He held

2. the Distribution

a. you know, I can hardly picture this

- (A) the lord taking one of those cheap, flat barley loaves
- (B) breaking off a piece and handing it to a disciple
- (C) the disciple repeating this process, to the end of the rows of each of the groups of fifty
- (D) a piece being taken of the part, the part passed down the row until it arrives at the end; then back again
- (E) the same with the fish until all were full and satisfied

b. it must have take a measure of faith for each disciple to reach out and take the morsel out of Jesus' hand and then repeat this action

- (A) but like the widow's meal and cruse of oil that did not fail all through the famine in Elijah's time
- (B) so this portion did not fail throughout all the distribution

3. the Collection

- a. basket – not a small, frail basket, but a large, sturdy one
- b. Jewish custom to leave food being distributed fo the servers

- c. each basket to a disciple, gathering the fragments – left-overs
 - (A) what would greedy Judas be thinking; multiply bread ... gold?
 - (B) was Andrew's question answered? This, what is this to so many?
- d. and these were full – where the food went it doesn't say, but it was used, not lost or destroyed

4. The Reaction

- a. they were blasé about what God had done; Jesus tells us of their focus: *'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) – but more about that in a couple of weeks, Lord willing
- b. this is a pretty good thing: a king that feeds his subjects
 - (A) usually it is the other way around
 - (B) if our government feeds & clothes us, it does so with our money
- c. so they would have made Jesus King
 - (A) but this was not the Kingship that Jesus sought
 - (B) not satisfying mere physical needs to foster indolence
 - (C) for His kingdom was not of this world, but of an heavenly one
 - (D) and His kingship would only be entered via the cross
- d. so Jesus departs away from the crowd, up into the mountain

D. The Time of Prayer

1. A Renewed Temptation

- a. one of the three recorded temptation of Jesus was to bow down to Satan, and Satan would give Him the kingdoms of this world
 - (A) Satan proposes an easy way to become king
 - (B) the people here tempt Jesus with an easy way to become king
- b. but this was not the way of the Father's will
 - (A) "If it be possible let this cup pass from me, but not my will but thine be done" (Luke 22:42, Matthew 26:39)
 - (B) the way of God's salvation is the way of the cross

2. To Resist Temptation

- a. Jesus fled from the people who would make him untimely king

- b. to a place of defence against temptation
- c. up that mountain to the place of prayer (found in other gospels)
- d. Jesus need that strength to carry through His commission – "... He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 Therefore also God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Philippians 2:8-11)

E. The Walking on the Water – a Private Sign

1. The Disciples Head West

- a. When Jesus sent the multitudes away, he had sent the disciples back to the other side of the sea of Galilee
 - (A) they had left it late and evening was come
 - (B) the Sea of Galilee 200 metres below ocean level – it is like a depression with hills all around
 - (C) in the day, the land becomes hotter than the sea
 - (D) at night, the reverse happens, so that the air over the sea is warm and rises, and on the land all around if cools and falls – result is the sea becomes turbulent with off-shore winds all around the sea
- b. this is an eye-witness account
 - (A) John – with Peter, Andrew, James – was a fisherman
 - (B) He know they had rowed so long, so far, but now no progress
 - (C) for every stroke forward, the wind drove them backward
 - (D) they could not get to their desired destination

2. They Meet Jesus

- a. spend some time reading the three accounts
- b. putting all the details together
- c. their thought when they saw this apparition that was Jesus
- d. Peter's boldness and fear; trust and lack of faith
- e. but when Jesus entered the boat, they arrived at their destination

F. Conclusion

1. This is a story of two signs

- a. the one was a public sign showing that indeed, as some of those there perceived, this Jesus was the promised

prophet; Messiah

- (A) they fully recognized that as God fed Israel in the wilderness
 - (B) Jesus had fed them in this wilderness
 - (C) but it was something only for the present time, and for them, it had no lasting meaning
- b. the other was private and for Jesus' disciples alone
- (A) demonstrating once again to them that He is the Son of God
 - (B) that in the midst of their every weakness; of our every weakness
 - (C) He alone is the one who can guide us safely to our journey's end
2. It is a story of two groups of people
- a. the one, led by their own desires, mistook Jesus' purpose
- (A) they looked for human satisfaction
 - (B) they were disappointed
 - (C) those who come to Jesus, looking for physical or material benefit
 - (D) they will be disappointed
- b. the other's were following Jesus' command to go to the other side
- (A) it was beginning to look like a hopeless enterprise
 - (B) but they persevered
 - (C) then Jesus steps into the boat and they are at their destination
 - (D) those who are seeking to follow the Lord Jesus
 - (E) will find that when he steps into their boat – when they are with Him in any place – they have indeed arrived at their destination.

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| ASV | American Standard Version of 1901 |
| AV | Authorized (King James) Version of 1769 |
| NAS | New American Standard version © 1960, 1995 The Lockman Foundation (usually the 1995 edition) |
| NIV | New International Version © 1984 by the International Bible Society |
| NLT | New Living Translation © 1996 Tyndale Charitable Trust |
| NKJV | New King James Version © 1979 Thomas Nelson Inc., Publishers |
| NRSV | New Revised Standard Version © 1989 National Council of Churches of Christ |
| RSV | Revised Standard Version © 1946, 1952 National Council of Churches of Christ; Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd |
| WEY | The New Testament in Modern Speech © 1902, 1912 R. F. Weymouth |

Some of the commentaries and resources used in the preparation of this message are identified as follow:

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| EBC | - The Expositor's Bible Commentary, © 1986 Zondervan, Grand Rapids, 49530, MI: John, by Merrill C. Tenney |
| NICNT | - The New International Commentary on the New Testament The Gospel according to John, by Leon Morris |
| NTC | - New Testament Commentary, by William Hendrickson; Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI; 1954 |
| RWP | - Robertson's Word Pictures of the New Testament, by Dr. A. T. Robertson |

2. *'Little Is Much When God Is in It,'* by Kittie Louse Jennett Suffield, (1884-1972)