

Exod 03-09-21b

Okay, we're ready to resume our study in the book of Exodus. We spent our first session this morning in the 6th chapter of John to try to give us some additional insight into how to view the 16th chapter of Exodus. And in that chapter we see God providing the staple for the diet of the Israelites in the wilderness, which is raining bread from heaven in verse 4. There's one thing, as I mentioned on the break, that I want to review and enhance our understanding of a little bit.

And that is right at the very beginning of the chapter, chapter 16. Sometimes we go through something and I have the feeling that I haven't really caught what was there. And if I don't catch it in time for class, we just have to drive on.

And then sometimes I catch it up, I catch it later. And I think that's what happened here. Take a look with me at Exodus chapter 16, verse 1. Right after Elim, right after the 12 wells and the 70 palm trees and that encampment, if you go to Numbers, you find that they had a couple of other stops on the journey.

But in chapter 16, they journeyed from Elim and all the congregation of the children of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin. Everyone together, tell me what Sin means in Hebrew. Thorn.

Which is between Elim and Sinai. What does Sinai mean in Hebrew? Thorny. On the 15th day of the second month after they departed from the land of Egypt, this is the part that got me.

What do you think about that? The 15th day of the second month after they departed from the land of Egypt. I think I mentioned in passing last time that, well, this would be the 14th Nisan, was the day of Passover, so the second month, this would be like 60 days later. But I wasn't real sure about that.

And as I looked at some various commentaries this week trying to find out, well, what do they say? They're all over the map. People say, well, it was 60 days, it was 45 days, it was all different kinds of time periods. So I did a little mini study on this and came to an interesting observation that I would like to share with you.

The 15th day of the second month after they departed from the land of Egypt. We know the day that they departed the land of Egypt. It was in the month Abib, A-B-I-B, which is later known as Nisan.

And we know that they commemorated ever after the 14th Nisan, which is Passover, right? And they marched out the next day. After the night with the blood on the doorposts, they put that on and they slaughtered the lamb on the sundown, the 14th of Nisan, splashed the blood, stayed in there, stabbed in their hand, bitter herbs, the whole thing with Passover. The next day is what day? It's the 15th of Abib, the 15th of Nisan, right? Now, I was thinking, well, the 15th of the second month after, this would be exactly 60 days later.

But, I was wrong. How do I know I was wrong? Because there are some commentators who would agree and say, yes, it was 60 days. Here's how I know.

First of all, just common usage. If I say, on the third day of the second week after your birthday, how many days would that be? The third day of the second week after your birthday. Well, 7 plus 3 would be 10 days later, right? You would add all of the days of the first week and the three days of the second week.

This is the 15th day of the second month after they left. So, this is a month-long period. Months are not as formal a unit in Hebrew and in Semitic thinking as they are in hours.

You notice they don't say on December 25th or on 14th Nisan. They always give things in relative terms. So, this is 45 days after 15th Nisan, 15th Abib.

This is 15 days into the second month after they left. Now, the reason this is significant is because, and you have to get that sorted out or the rest of this is just lost, but if you understand that it is 45 days later, then what happens? We get to Exodus chapter 16 and we read down through and the people are hungry and they say, you brought this group out in the wilderness to kill the whole assembly with hunger in verse 3, right? The Lord says to Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you. The people shall go out and gather a certain quota every day so that I may test them whether they will walk in my law or not.

Now, this really resonates after having read John chapter 6, doesn't it? The bread comes down from heaven and it is a test. What are you going to do with the bread? What are you going to do with every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God? What are you going to do with the words that Jesus speaks that are spirit and that are life? It is a test. We are being evaluated on our response to the bread just as Israel was here.

It shall be on the sixth day that they shall prepare what they bring in and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily. Now, I apologize for giving this short shrift last time. Look at that.

God says, I'm going to give you bread starting tomorrow for six days. On the sixth day, there will be twice as much. So, you know what this tells me? They arrived in this wilderness on a Saturday, 45 days after they left Egypt.

Six days, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, manna is falling on the ground. And on Friday, there is twice as much because when you get down to verse 22, so it was on the sixth day, this is the sixth day after the first day of manna, right? They gathered twice as much, two omers for each one. All the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses.

Then he said to them in verse 23, this is what the Lord has said, tomorrow is a Sabbath rest. This is the first formal Saturday, Sabbath, in history. Previous to this time, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, all these guys have not observed a Sabbath.

This is the first time that the Jews looked and said, Saturday is our Sabbath day of rest. It's six

days after the first instance of a time notification that they're 45 days out. Now, let's do a little math here.

How many, on this Friday, when they gathered the double portion, how many days has it been since they left Egypt? 45 days plus six days. 51 days since Passover, right? Now, turn with me to Leviticus chapter 23. Leviticus chapter 23.

This is an account of the feasts of the Lord. Look at verse 15. It's already talked about Passover in verses 4 through 8. It's already talked about first fruits, which is verses 9 through 14.

Then it says, You shall count for yourselves from the day after the Sabbath, from the day you brought the sheaf of the wave offering, seven Sabbaths shall be completed. Count 50 days to the day after the seventh Sabbath. Then you shall offer a new grain offering to the Lord.

This is the day of Pentecost. Pentecost, 50 days after this Sabbath, which is the day after Passover. How many days is that? 51.

What is the day that the double portion of manna appears for the Israelites? 51 days after Passover. So this is a highly significant time reference. We don't have a lot of time references in the Wilderness Wanderings, but when it specifically tells us that it is the 45th day when they show up in the wilderness of Sin, and then six days later is the double portion of manna, this is going to foreshadow the day of Pentecost.

God in the future, when they get to Sinai, is going to specify this day to be a feast day. And Pentecost sticks in our mind. Why? Because 50 days after the crucifixion and the death and burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, that Pentecost is the founding day of the church.

So, what? We ask ourselves. Having made this deduction, what should we draw from it? Well, let me offer you a couple of suggestions. The people gather manna for six days in anticipation of that seventh day.

They, on the sixth day, gather a double portion. And on that day, what they gather extra, looking ahead to the morrow, looking ahead to the Sabbath, does not spoil. Every other day they gather for the day, sufficient unto the day is the manna thereof, so to speak.

But on the sixth day, on that 51st day, that Pentecost day, they gather double because they are looking ahead to the Sabbath. And what they gather on that day does not spoil. It is going to be used on that seventh day.

Okay? They are not going to gather on the seventh day. They are going to use what they gathered on the sixth day. I would suggest to you that we are living in that sixth day.

We have the double portion that would have gone to the firstborn, but instead has come to us, much as Jacob got the birthright that belonged to Esau, because Esau swapped it for a mess of

pottage. Israel swapped their double portion blessings for a mess of pottage. And we, the younger brother, the late comers, now enjoy the blessings that would have gone to Israel had they been on the ball.

So we are gathering that double portion of manna, and why do we pay attention to the Word of God? Why do we seek to store it away in our souls? To learn it not only academically and mentally, but also experientially, by application. We are storing up for the Sabbath. We are storing up for that seventh thousand, that seventh day of human history, where we will not be gathering so much as applying.

Now, I like to think that we'll continue to learn and grow all the way through the Millennial Kingdom, but the emphasis in this passage is, the Millennial Kingdom is going to be a time of using what we gathered in this life. We are gathering a double portion now in anticipation of that time. And isn't that really the emphasis throughout Scripture? The Apostle Paul, the Apostle Peter, the Apostle John are constantly encouraging us to grow in grace and knowledge of the Savior, waiting for the time of the Lord's appearing, that we not be ashamed at His coming, that we be equipped for every good work, that we pass muster in the judgment, that we lay hold of eternal life, we lay hold of our inheritance.

How do we do that? Not by just getting saved and saying, well, I'll catch it all up when I get to the Millennial Kingdom. I didn't really pay much attention in this life, but I'll have a thousand years to catch up with everybody. There'd be nothing but Bible class in the Kingdom.

That's not what this picture is for us, is it? Gather now. We are the Pentecost age. We are the double portion age.

We have things that Moses longed to see, that angels have longed to see in this age. Much has been given to us, and we should be storing it and preparing to use it in that seventh day. That's one idea that suggests itself to me.

Another is, take a look at verse 16 here. Moses said to them, This is the bread the Lord has given you to eat. This is what the Lord has commanded.

Each one is to gather as much as he needs. Now, in Hebrew, this says each man. Each man is to gather as much as he needs.

Take an omer for each one in your household. Take an omer for each one in your household. Who gathers the manna? I had always kind of pictured women out there with an apron or a bag or something, little kids, the women and children going out and gathering the manna first thing in the morning.

But what does God say here? He says, Each man will gather it according to his need. One omer for each person according to the number of persons in the household. Let every man take for those who are in his tent.

Who has the spiritual leadership responsibility in the tent? It is the man. It doesn't say let the women gather. It says the man is to gather.

And this comports with what we find in our New Testament Scriptures, that if a lady has questions in church, she is to ask her husband at home. The husband is to nurture his wife in the faith, just as Christ nurtures the church. Loved it and gave himself for it, and so on.

So, it is very clear in Hebrew, it mentions the man all the way through here. Verse 18, when they measured it by omers, He who gathered much had nothing left over. It doesn't say they who gathered much.

It says he. He who gathered little had no lack. Every man had gathered according to each one's need.

So, the men are the ones who gather the spiritual nourishment to their household. So, there is a responsibility on those of us who are men and are heads of a household to minister the word that we gather to our families. It doesn't keep them from partaking and attending Bible class, and so on.

But you can see a principle. God designated the man to be the provider. Back in Genesis, after the fall, God said the man shall earn his bread by the sweat of his brow.

Provide for his family. And you see that reflected here. The man, since they are not growing crops, and they are not cultivating livestock in a permanent way, and they are not ranching here, because they are in a nomadic way of life, the man is still the one gathering the bread for the household by the sweat of his brow.

And so that is the principle that is emphasized here. Notice in verse 23. This is what the Lord has said.

Tomorrow is a Sabbath rest, a holy Sabbath to the Lord. Bake what you will bake today, and boil what you will boil, and lay up for yourselves all that remains to be kept until morning. Some of what we gather, we use and consume in the day.

Some of it we lay up for the morrow. We bake what we are going to bake, and we boil what we are going to boil, and we lay up everything that remains for the morrow. Well, manna evidently was not something that you just wanted to eat raw all the time.

You made things with it. You could make cakes. You could make some sort of staple foods.

Make a kind of bread out of it, I would guess. You could make a stew out of it. You could boil it and make some sort of a stew or soup.

So, some of it was prepared for consumption in the day that it was gathered. Others of it is stored up for future use. That is exactly what we have in the Word of God.

We say, well, you know, we are in this passage of Scripture, and I just do not see how that applies to me. I do not see why I need to know that. I am not getting the answer to my so what question out of some of these things I am learning.

Well, perhaps this is manna that is being stored up for the morrow. We cannot necessarily bake it and consume it today. We cannot necessarily boil it and digest it and make use of it at the moment.

But, it is important for our future function. It is something we will have with us when we need it on the morrow. Anyway, I find this quite fascinating.

God has orchestrated much of His plan in human history in a symmetrical, chronological fashion. You find the feast days in Israel to be highly significant in terms of timing. I think it is quite momentous here that the first week of the provision of manna leads up to the day that will become the anniversary day, Pentecost, that will be celebrated throughout Israel's history and will be celebrated as the birthday of the church.

So, I feel much better now about having covered the 15th day of the second month and covering the six days that followed that, coming up to that first and most important Sabbath. Now, let us move forward to chapter 17 and see how far we can get in the time that remains. Then all the congregation of the children of Israel set out on their journey from the wilderness of sin, according to the commandment of the Lord, and camped in Rephidim.

But there was no water for the people to drink. Now, how many times has there been a need? How many times has God provided? What should the response be to a no water situation? Where should we turn? What direction should our gaze direct itself? Who is the provider? Who is the one who issued the call? Who is the one that started the group on this mission and delivered them with a mighty hand and brought them through the Red Sea and brought them to bitter waters that were made sweet and brought them to the 12 wells and the 70 palm trees and is now providing bread on a daily basis? It would be monumentally silly for God to give them manna in the morning and have them die of thirst in the afternoon. It just does not comport with reason.

And yet, when there is a problem in the provision stream here, they run out of water, the people contend with Moses and say, You give us water that we may drink. Moses said to them, Why do you contend with me? Why do you tempt the Lord? This reminds me of our study over in Acts with Ananias and Sapphira. Peter tells Ananias and Sapphira, You have lied not to men but to God.

What we do to each other is viewed by God in the light of His requirements. The people thirsted there for water and the people complained against Moses and said, Why is it you, Moses, have brought us up out of Egypt to kill us and our children and our livestock with thirst? So what is their idea here? They do not want to blame God. It is not God's fault.

And it is certainly not their fault. So it must be Moses' fault. He is the convenient scapegoat for all of their wrath.

He is the point man. Moses cried out to the Lord. Now, who knows where to go with a problem? That is why he is the leader.

Moses goes to the Lord and says, What shall I do with this people? They are about ready to stone me. The Lord said to Moses, Now look at this, verse 5. What does God say to Moses? Go on before the people. Leave them behind.

Leave them mumbling and grumbling and complaining to themselves. You go on ahead. Take some of the elders of Israel.

Get a few of your best men. Leave the people behind. Go forward.

Also take in your hand your rod with which you struck the river and go. What do we know about that rod? What does it represent? Authority from God. It is the power of God that makes the sea part.

It is the power of God that produces the plagues. But it is at the behest of Moses. It is authority to invoke the power of God at will.

Moses decides when he is going to raise the rod. Take your authority symbol. The authority that has been given you by God at the burning bush.

Take a few of your best men and go forward. Leave the people behind. Behold, I will stand before you there on the rock in Horeb.

What is Horeb? It is Mount Sinai. Horeb is another name of Mount Sinai. It is the name of the mountain that preceded the name Sinai.

Sinai is the name given to the mountain in connection with the Exodus. Almost exclusively. The rest of the time it is Horeb.

You shall strike the rock and water will come out of it that the people may drink. Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel. So he called the name of the place Massah and Meribah because of the contention of the children of Israel and because they tempted the Lord saying, Is the Lord among us or not? Well, need I be a master of the obvious about the foreshadowing of the crucifixion of Christ here? He is the rock.

We are explicitly told that in Paul's letters and in Hebrews, the book of Hebrews. They drank from that rock that followed them. And that rock was Christ.

Christ is stricken for the people. Life-giving water comes from that striking and splitting. The striking is done by the leadership because of the complaint and the murmuring of the people.

But the people are not themselves the agent. They don't each come up and strike the rock and get a cup of water. God could have had it that way.

Big long line, come up, tap the rock, glass of water comes out. Next guy comes up, taps the rock, glass of water comes out. But no.

Moses, functioning as the civil leader of the people here as well as the spiritual leader, goes up with the rod and strikes it with the rod. What does this tell us about the crucifixion of Christ? It was not an accident. It was done with the foreknowledge and according to the foreordained purpose of God.

It was by God's authority that Christ was stricken. But it was the hand of man, it was the leadership in Israel that did it. And you have the people grumbling and complaining and saying, is the Lord among us or not? What was the first name that was assigned to the Lord Jesus? Back in Isaiah chapter 7. Thou shalt call His name Emmanuel, God with us.

What did the people decide when Jesus was crucified? He's not God with us. He is not the Son of God. He is not who He represents Himself to be.

You say you're the bread that came down from heaven. How can you say that? That's blasphemy. They couldn't figure out if He was the Lord among them or not.

And that's why He was stricken. Massah and Meribah are names that mean testing and contention. Testing and contention.

Because of the contention of the children of Israel and because they tempted the Lord saying, is the Lord among us or not? What does it mean when they tempted or tested the Lord? It's supposed to be the other way around. He's giving them manna and testing them day by day, right? But instead, man has set himself up as the arbiter and the judge of whether God is doing the right thing or not. And we sometimes slip into this.

We rail at the way things are. And we say, God, why have you allowed this to happen? If you brought me out in this wilderness to die, why have you let this happen? Why am I in this situation? Well, this is akin to the first table of the law that is soon to come. That says, thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain to blaspheme God, to put God to the test.

Say, well, if you're among us, then fix this problem on my timing and in my way. God says, no. I know your needs.

I will provide for you in my time and in my way. But they want to hurry God up. They're not willing to be stretched.

They're not willing to express faith. When they get in a fix, they want to blame someone. They want to grumble at someone and complain at someone and stone someone.

Instead of saying, these things are in the foreordained plan and purpose of God. I will wait on

the Lord. I will watch for the nature of His provision.

Perhaps I am to plow and plant. Perhaps I am to wait for the bread to fall from heaven. Each of us has to make that call.

But we are not to put the Lord to the test. Well, the place is called Massah and Meribah. All these things were written for our instruction.

What do we draw from this passage? God has made provision and by doing so has demonstrated that He wants the children of Israel to live. So it is illogical to assume that He is going to let them die of thirst no matter how short of water they run. Where should they turn? Why is God withholding the water? I would submit to you that if these were people of faith, if these were people of obedience, this would have brought out their faith and their obedience.

Behold, they fell on their face to the Lord and cried all night and said, Lord, our children are crying and our animals are lowing. Please give us the water. Because they are not people of faith, because they are not people of obedience, this test, testing always reveals the nature of something, doesn't it? When I was at the Naval Academy, they had these little extruded bars that they would put in a special thing to test their tensile strength.

They would put them in a gripper and then they would apply force and see how much force it took to pull the bar apart. And that told it the nature of that metal, how much tensile strength it had. Well, you couldn't find it out without stretching it, applying pressure to it.

The same is true of us. Testing shows what's on the inside. And we either are like a piece of fruit with wonderful sweetness inside or we're like a festering boil with all kinds of bad stuff inside.

But the testing reveals what is on the inside. This testing reveals that Israel has a long way to go before they're ready to enter the land. We want to learn from this and recognize that God's testing is for the purpose of demonstration of what is on the inside.

You cannot show the heroism of a soldier unless he's put in a situation that requires heroics, that requires self-sacrifice. We are put in situations that require faith, that require following the Lord by taking up our cross and denying ourselves so that we can end up where He is. We subsist on the bread from heaven.

We make it the object of our faith. We let God sort out the timing and the provision. That is the example that we're given here, and that is the encouragement that we have throughout the Word of God to not wind up leaving a legacy of Massah and Meribah in the written record in heaven of our lives.

So, food for thought. Let's close in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the clear way you demonstrate your plan and purpose and your will for us.

Thank you for the drawing that you exercise toward us, not only for salvation, but also for our

daily growth and the encouragement you give us to encamp beside the still waters and in the green pastures and partake of that which you have provided for us. Help us to see the applicability of these truths in our individual circumstances. May each of us take the omer of manna that is designated for us and consume it all.

We pray that as a result our lives will reflect your glory and the glory of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. We pray it in his name. Amen.