



# Geography of Salvation

## *Preaching the Map*

A Bible Study with Stan Key

### WONDER BREAD

#### Exodus 16:1–36

#### I. Introduction

POWs in Hanoi Hilton returned after the Vietnam war with few suffering from PTSD. In fact, the group produced 16 generals, 6 admirals, 2 college presidents, 2 U.S. ambassadors, 2 U.S. senators, 2 U.S. representatives, a state governor, a presidential candidate, and much more. Why? Primarily because of the culture developed in the prison by Jim Stockdale.<sup>1</sup> Lesson: you can't choose what happens to you, but you can choose how you **respond!**

#### II. You are what you eat.

##### A. The bible is a **food-driven** book.

1. Our original sin was the desire to eat **forbidden** fruit. “When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate...” (Gn 3:6).
2. Our salvation comes in **eating** the body of Christ. “I am the bread of life... and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh... For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink” (Jn 6:48, 51, 55).
3. Salvation hinges on one simple question: Is my appetite stronger for the meat pots, leaks, onions, garlic, and melons of Egypt (Ex 16:3; Num 11:4–5) or for the **milk and honey** of Canaan (Ex 3:8, 17). Am I hungry for God?
  - “O God, you are my God; earnestly I seek you; my soul **thirsts** for you; my flesh faints for you, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.” (Ps 63:1)
  - “Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters... Come, buy wine and milk without **money** and without price... Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food.” (Isa 55:1–2)
  - “Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be **satisfied**” (Mt 5:6)

B. Though the Hebrews have gotten out of Egypt, they still have Egyptian **appetites**. Until this hunger for the food of this world is replaced by the hunger for the food of Canaan, the Hebrews will do laps in the wilderness.

C. But how does one acquire an appetite for the nourishment of God? This may be harder than you think and may take more time than you imagine. God gave manna to help **cleanse the palate** and develop a hunger for the milk and honey of Canaan.

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<sup>1</sup> Peter Fretwell and Taylor Baldwin Kiland, *Lessons from the Hanoi Hilton: Six Characteristics of High-Performance Teams* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2013).

### III. Bread from Heaven

The Problem	God's Response	Solution Implemented	Instructions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Surface problem: no food</li> <li>• Deeper problems:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Grumbling</li> <li>○ Hunger for Egypt</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">vv. 1–3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I will give bread from heaven</li> <li>• In this way I will test them</li> <li>• Then they will know that I am the LORD</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">vv. 4–12</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quail</li> <li>• Manna (whatzit)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">vv. 13–15</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 quarts each</li> <li>• Don't try to keep it for tomorrow</li> <li>• Sabbath observance</li> <li>• Put a jar in the ark</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">vv. 16–36</p>

#### Notes on the text:

1. They have been traveling **one month** since they crossed Red Sea.
2. The “wilderness of Sin” (v 1). There is a linguistic connection to “Sinai” though this is not the same location.
3. This was the second “test” at University of the Desert (15:25; 16:4). Marah had taught the redeemed how to deal with bitterness. This test would teach them how to **trust** the Lord for their **daily bread**. (cf. Mt 6:11).
4. The word manna means “What is it?” (v 15). In English we might suggest: **Whatzit**.
5. Manna was “like coriander seed, white, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey” (v 31). See Numbers 11:7–8.
6. It is doubtful that as slaves the Hebrews would have been able to observe the **Sabbath** in Egypt. Now, God teaches them how to practice a seven-day week. Sabbath observance was all about **rest** and **worship**.

### IV. The Grumpies.

- A. The word “grumble” occurs 8 times in this chapter and is a major theme during the entire journey.<sup>2</sup> Grumbling is a **deadly** sin. It poisons health, destroys relationships, quenches the Spirit, extinguishes faith, and keeps one doing laps in the desert forever!
- B. I become grumpy when I am **hungry**. Churches become grumpy places when the sheep hungry. To deal with “the grumpies” one must learn to **eat properly**.
- C. Grumbling (murmuring, complaining, griping, belly-aching) is a condition that:
  1. Is based in the (false) assumption that my inner happiness is determined by my **outward circumstances**.
  2. Believes I **deserve better** than this.
  3. May be aimed against leaders, spouses, neighbors, adversaries, etc.. But in reality, all grumbling is against **the LORD** (v 8).
  4. Is **contagious**. “See to it that...no root of bitterness springs up and causes trouble, and by it many become defiled.” (Heb 12:15)

<sup>2</sup> Ex 15:24; 17:3; Num 11:1; 14:2, 27, 29, 36; 16:11, 41; 17:5, 10; Deut 1:27

D. Grumbling Is **curable**... but this may take some time!

1. Paul wrote from prison: “I have **learned** in whatever situation I am to be content...” (Phil 4:11).
2. *Pilgrim’s Progress. Part 2. The Pilgrimage of Christiana.*

Matthew, a pilgrim on the road to the Celestial City, fell ill because he ate some green plums from Beelzebub’s orchard. He was “much pained in his bowels, so that he was with it at times pulled as ‘twere both ends together.” Mr. Skill, a godly physician, examined him and diagnosed the problem: he has **the gripes**. Mr. Skill took the body and blood of Christ and made him a laxative (a purge): making it into pills, adding a promise or two, some salt, and a dose of the tears of repentance. Though Matthew feared the medicine would be bitter, he took it and was immediately cured of the gripes.

V. This is Only a Test: There are six important questions on this exam.

God leads us to Desert U to teach us some very important lessons. Though the test may be painful, it has a very good and **loving purpose**. God leads us to a place of scarcity and hunger to prepare us for the battles we will face when it comes times to possess our inheritance in Canaan.

*My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord... For the Lord disciplines the one he loves... God is treating you as **sons**. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you are left without discipline... then you are illegitimate children and not sons... He disciplines us for our good, that we may share his **holiness**. For the moment all discipline seems painful rather than pleasant, but **later** it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who have been trained by it. (Heb 12:5–11)*

- A. Do you suffer from the grumpies?  Yes  No

If you answered “yes”, please describe your symptoms. Example: pouting, shouting, bellyaching about your leaders, infecting others with your gripes, etc. Exodus 16 teaches that the cause of the grumpies is some form of **eating disorder**.

- B. What are you hungry for?  Leaks, onions, garlic  Milk and honey

*Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labor for that which does not satisfy? Listen diligently to me, and eat what is good and delight yourselves in **rich food**. (Isa 55:2)*

The real problem is not hunger but that we are hungry for the wrong things! Leaks and onions may keep our bodies alive but send our souls to hell. “The greatest enemy of hunger for God is not poison, but **apple pie**” (John Piper, *A Hunger for God*, 14). The problem with junk food is not just that it is junk; it **ruins** our appetite for healthy food! Describe the spiritual junk food that you have been consuming. Example: worldly entertainment, mindless entertainment, meaningless conversations, etc.

Imagine manna every day (manna casserole, manna burgers, manna soufflé, manna with cheese, manna-coti, etc.). When you are on a journey the point is not culinary delicacies or gastronomical pleasure: but **nutrition** and sustenance for the rigors of travel. He gives us bread so that we will discover that “man does not live by bread alone” (Deut 8:3). Manna leaves us hungry again. This prepares us for realizing that our real need is for:

- The **Bible**—“...every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord” (Deut 8:3).

- **Jesus**—“I am the true and living bread” (see Jn 6).

C. Have I learned to feed myself?  Yes  No

In the desert, God provides the bread from heaven but the people have to go out and **gather it** for themselves. Babies need to be fed. Adulthood is when we learn to feed ourselves. Churches that complain about not being fed usually are bearing witness to their own perpetual **immaturity!**

*Though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the **basic principles** of the oracles of God. You need milk, not solid food, for everyone who lives on milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, since he is a child. But solid food is for the mature, for those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice to distinguish good from evil. (Heb 5:12–14)*

D. When do I eat?  Daily  Weekly  Monthly  I am already dead

Manna was given **daily**; to give strength and nourishment so that travelers could make a days journey. Perhaps one can go a week or even a month without food. But unless one learns to eat good food on a regular basis, at some point the journey ends and the traveler dies. We need time in **God's Word** every day for the same reason we need to eat a good meal every day.

E. Do I have an eating disorder?  
 Anorexia (I don't eat at all, but I keep this a secret)  
 Bulimia (I binge and purge)  
 Obesity (I overeat and don't exercise)  
 Other

Commons signs of eating disorders include:

- Skipping meals
- Obsessing on how one looks
- Nausea
- Overeating to the point of sickness
- Excessive exercising
- Dieting by day and bingeing by night
- Obsessing over the nutritional value of foods
- Chewing on non-food items

F. In whom is my trust?  Myself  Moses (the government)  God

The primary purpose of the manna test is to teach travelers to have **faith** in God... and God **alone**. Each morning, when I open the flap of my tent, I look out my door and begin my day trusting that there will be enough provision from God to allow me and my family to make it until **sundown**. Like a muscle, God strengthens faith by stretching it. A faith that has not been tested is no faith at all.

*So be truly glad. There is wonderful joy ahead, even though you must endure many trials for a little while. These trials will show that your faith is **genuine**. It is being tested as fire tests and purifies gold—though your faith is far more precious than mere gold. So when your faith remains strong through many trials, it will bring you much praise and glory and honor on the day when Jesus Christ is revealed to the whole world. (1 Pet 1:6–7 NLT)*

## TABLE TALK

1. Talk about a time when you found yourself in a desert place of great scarcity and want. How did you respond?
2. What does the author mean when he says the Bible is “food-driven” book? Do you agree or disagree?
3. What did you learn from this lesson about “the grumpies”? Do you ever suffer from this malady? Will this Bible study affect the way you handle the grumpies?
4. Do you struggle with any spiritual eating disorders? Which ones?
5. Have you learned to feed yourself? Why is this so important?
6. Homework: Read John 6 and meditate on how Jesus drew for Exodus 16 in his miracle of feeding the 5,000 and then claiming, “I am the true bread.”.

## All Who Hunger, Gather Gladly

Text by Sylvia B. Dunstan, 1990

*All who hunger, gather gladly;  
holy manna is our bread.  
Come from wilderness and wandering.  
Here, in truth, we will be fed.  
You that yearn for days of fullness,  
all around us is our food.  
Taste and see the grace eternal.  
Taste and see that God is good.*

*All who hunger, never strangers;  
seeker, be a welcome guest.  
Come from restlessness and roaming.  
Here, in joy, we keep the feast.  
We that once were lost and scattered  
in communion's love have stood.  
Taste and see the grace eternal.  
Taste and see that God is good.*

*All who hunger, sing together;  
Jesus Christ is living bread.  
Come from loneliness and longing.  
Here, in peace, we have been led.  
Blest are those who from this table  
live their lives in gratitude.  
Taste and see the grace eternal.  
Taste and see that God is good.*