

John 18 – Peirasmos the Five Thousand: Back to Exodus

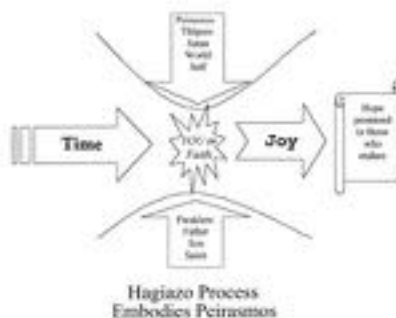
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John 6:1-15

Definition of Trial or Testing

- Bible defines concept of trial, testing, and temptation
 - Hebrew (יָסָה) – Testing to determine truth of self
 - Greek (πειρασμός/ πειράζω) – Same as Hebrew
- The trial or testing (hereafter called peirasmos) seeks to determine the truth about the person/object being assayed (purification of silver or gold) that God knows (omniscient) but you do not (Is 66:10-12; Je 6:27-30; 1Pe 1:7; Re 3:18)

Hagiazo – Peirasmos Schematic

- Peirasmos integral to the Hagiazo Process (Make Holy or Sanctification)
- Dispensationalism defined by this Process
 - God's Command-
Man's Failure-God's
Response



The Setting

- Geographical context
 - Upper area of Galilee
 - Sparsely inhabited
 - Near Sea of Galilee
- Christ usually based in Capernaum when in Galilee (Peter's home)



Why Bethsaida?

- Herod Antipas executed John Baptist
- Jesus took apostles into Herod Philip's kingdom
- Provided safety from unpredictable Antipas - "Cooling off" period



People Followed Him

- Jesus, already renown for His healings, was confronted by large crowds when He came ashore with apostles
 - He had compassion on them as sheep without shepherd
 - He taught them spiritual truths of God's Kingdom (Mt 5:7)
 - He healed their physical issues - Each a creative action
- As the day wanes the scene is set to begin peirasmoi

Jesus Begins with His Apostles

- Christ asks where can they find *bread* to feed the crowd
 - The apostles suggest to Jesus that He send the crowds away so they can find their own provision
 - Christ challenges them, "You feed them," to test the faith of the apostles; show their own need to rest in God
 - They are stunned for they do not know how to feed so many with the little they possess

What About the People

- The men numbered about 5,000, thus, the crowd was probably closer to 10,000 with women & children
 - Men came without food - Unprepared to meet God
 - Only a poor boy prepared: 2 fish and 5 barley loaves
 - Apostles overwhelmed at prospect of feeding them
- Christ blessed the food, apostles handed it out and collected remnants were 12 Baskets of abundance

Mirrors Exodus Event (Ex 16:1-15)

- Similar circumstances
 - Hebrews in desolate area without provisions unable to provide their own means; utter dependence on God
- Dissimilar circumstances
 - People in Exodus tested God finding Him lacking
 - People in John quiet but still unable to grasp the truth of His teachings and their need of *new covenant* salvation

God Provides Manna

- In Exodus God provided people manna (What is it?)
 - Manna signifies they did not know God or His truths
 - Later they refused to hear directly from God (Ex. 20:18-21)
 - Moses says God peirasmos them to teach them and He will speak through Moses to the people (Ex. 14:34-35)
 - Moses prophesized of *The Prophet* to come (De. 18:15-19)
 - Jesus is that Prophet, and more... (Jh. 1:1-6, 5:14)

People Perceived Him as *The Prophet*

- The Hebrew people recalled the Exodus event and coupled it with Moses' prophesy of *The Prophet*
 - No one could create food from nothing except God
 - God worked through Jesus; ergo, He was Messiah-man
 - They were ready to make Him their King Messiah
 - They heard His Kingdom message through their Judaic, Talmudic traditional worldview

Christ Withdrew to Mount

- Just as God in Exodus spoke from a mount; Jesus retreated to a mount to prevent His crowning
 - Christ prayed to God probably for strength
 - Lucifer offering this as a way to bypass the stauros
- Best way to isolate yourself from God is to ignore His truth though you substitute your *truths* (Worldview)

Fourteen Hundred Years of Truth

- Hebrew people had learned very little of God's plan
 - Their own *wisdom* always at odds with God's truth
 - They had little conception of New Covenant salvation
 - Only thought of the now ignoring eternity future
 - Choosing any path other than God's truth means living apart from God: Without a shepherd - Without hope
 - Could not understand the hope Christ was presenting
(Ro 3:10-18)

Culminates Kingdom Message

- Similarity to the origin event of manna not lost on Jews
 - Their view of the kingdom was earthly, as lords in flesh and blood bodies, controlling the world (1Co 1:28)
 - God's view of the Kingdom is eternity future in flesh and bone bodies living in concert with Him (1Co 15)
 - Paschal Lamb sacrifice transitions from Old Covenant [temporary] to New Covenant [permanent]

Truth Via the Law Has Failed

- Jews sought to establish their righteousness by the Law and missed the purpose of the Law
 - Revelation of sin (Ro 7:14)
 - Revelation of the true Messiah - Paschal Lamb
- Law could not be met by the flesh [old nature] but only via the spirit [new nature] after salvation (1Co 3:12)

Setting the Stage

- Christ chose the feeding of the crowd to set the stage for what He will say the next day to everyone
 - The use of *bread* is a metaphor and was a metaphor that had previously escaped their notice
 - Their *bread* in Exodus, *what is it* (manna) revealed their lack of understanding as to its intended meaning
 - Christ will teach them, and us, its true meaning and fulfillment based upon this feeding miracle

They Came for the Kingdom

- The crowds, indeed all Judaism, were waiting for the coming Messiah to rescue them from the Romans
 - They wanted a conquering Messiah (human)
 - They wanted to rule the world via the Law in the flesh
 - This was not the reason for this coming of Jesus as a lowly slave of God
 - Christ will use these events to illustrate why He came

Christ Came to Die

- There can be no New Covenant if there is not a death for sin as illustrated by the Paschal Lamb (14- 10:59)
 - Animal, or even human, sacrifice does not atone for sin
 - The life of the innocent animal pointed toward Christ
 - Only a sinless man could atone for sin
 - Only God could offer atonement for infinite God
 - Christ (God-Man) was always the intended sacrifice

Kingdom Not Possible in Flesh

- The Kingdom of God was never possible in the flesh
(Re 20:7-15)
 - The failure of fleshly man to submit to God during the Millennial Kingdom dispensation when Christ rules directly disproves their dream of human, kingly Messiah
 - This creation was developed only to prepare a godly people {new bodies} for the new earth and heavens - There will be no permanent rulership now (1Co 15:51-49)

Finally...

- This was Passover so probably begins the last year of His ministry meaning He was looking toward the **stauros** (1K 9:21-22)
 - The remainder of John's Gospel will center on this message with fleshly man becoming increasingly hostile
 - There will be fewer followers until at the stauros there will be only Christ, and eventually John with Mary

Christian Comprehension

- Christians must understand the Hebraic motif to grasp the message and fundamental change in the message
 - Follows Opening Hymn - His own will reject Him
(Jo 1:11-13)
 - But, to those who do believe they will become *children of God* complete in the *new creation*
 - The Law came via Moses, who died, but grace comes via Christ who died & rose: Only Begotten Son (Jo 1:17-18)