



## Exodus 16:4-21

### Bread from Heaven

"When the Lord's hand is in your mouth you're fed generously." That ancient saying from the Middle East is wonderfully true.

When we are hungry, we grumble. We gripe even if we think we might miss a single meal.

We are not the only ones who get spoiled. The "whole congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled . . . in the wilderness" (Exodus 16:2). Two million people were grumbling at Moses and Aaron because they were afraid they would miss a meal. Grumbling is serious business and has dire consequences. It is found six times in next few verses. "Your grumbings are not against us but against the LORD" (v. 8).

What they really missed were their "pots of meat" (v. 3). They were so attached to their pots of flesh that they haggled Moses saying, "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."

The LORD wanted the people to trust Him. All they had to do was trust Him and walk in obedience. We think that it is so much easier and wiser to walk by sight. Then the Lord has an amazing way of knocking our false securities out from under us so we are made to trust Him. He makes us see that He alone provides our every need.

#### **The LORD provided manna.**

"Then the Lord said to Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether or not they will walk in My instruction " (v. 4).

The word *manna* is a transliteration of two Hebrew words meaning, "What is it?" Moses didn't provide the manna; God did. The LORD provided meat at night and manna in the morning for the next forty years, or until they crossed over the Jordan (vv. 13-21, 35). All of chapter sixteen gives instructions on gathering and eating manna. Every day for forty years they saw God provide! It should have produced a song of praise every morning and evening. "I saw God do it!" It was His supernatural gift. They did not work for it. They did not earn it. It was without money and without

did not work for it. They did not earn it. It was without money and without price. It was a free gift from God. All they could do was appropriate it. Every morning each individual bent over, picked it up and ate it!

However, the manna met only a temporal need of the body for a short period. The Israelites came to loathe the manna. They were forever grumbling and complaining about it. Everyone one of them who ate it, with the exception of Joshua and Caleb died in the wilderness because of unbelief and disobedience!

The message is clear. When you love Him, you don't have any problem obeying Him. "If you love Me you will keep My commandments," Jesus said.

### **Jesus is the Bread of Heaven.**

Manna is a type of Christ giving His life that the believer might eternal life. Jesus Christ is the true manna. He is the Bread from heaven.

Jesus tells us about bread that gives life. It is not the commodity, but a Person who gives life that begins the moment someone believes on him and it satisfies throughout eternity. The life He gives is eternal because He is eternal. The person who believes on Jesus receives eternal life. He is the giver of life for all who will believe on Him. Just as the Yahweh provided manna in the wilderness of Sin, Jesus is the heavenly provider of the bread of heaven that issues in eternal life. A person who eats His bread will never die.

Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent." So they said to Him, "What then do You do for a sign, so that we may see, and believe You? What work do You perform? Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, He gave them bread out of heaven to eat. " Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world." Then they said to Him, "Lord, always give us this bread." Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst. But I said to you that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe" (John 6:29-36).

Jesus used a figure of speech that means to believe on Him. We must appropriate the bread He gives. We do so by faith in Him. Jesus is not referring to the Lord's Supper or the "sacraments." The Lord's Supper came a year later. Jesus would not have used the symbolism of the Lord's Supper while speaking to the Jews who were arguing with Him. They wouldn't be able to understand Him. "Eating" and "drinking" is simple faith in Him and the provision of eternal life He has made for us. We "eat" and "drink" Jesus by believing on Him as our personal Savior. Note how often in the context Jesus refers to believing on Him (vv. 29, 35, 40, 47, 69). His death gives life to all who believe on Him. The only possible meaning is the spiritual appropriation of Jesus Christ by faith. "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes has eternal life" (v. 47).

In Galatians 2:16, 20 the apostle Paul's teaching is clear on this subject. Nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified. . . . I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me. "

Himself up for me. ”

Jesus is more than manna; He is our bread of life. We can have all of Him that we desire, and we can never desire too much of Him. We definitely will never be disappointed in Him. May the Lord cure us of our spiritual anemia and cause our hearts to feast daily at His table.

"I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread which comes down out of heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down out of heaven; if anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread also which I will give for the life of the world is My flesh." (John 6:48-51).

Jesus went on to stress that He came from the Father in heaven and we can have fellowship with Him. "He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood abides in Me, and I in him. As the living Father sent Me, and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also will live because of Me. This is the bread which came down out of heaven; not as the fathers ate and died; he who eats this bread will live forever" (6:56-58).

Jesus has the last word on manna. He said, "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, to him I will give *some* of the hidden manna, and I will give him a white stone, and a new name written on the stone which no one knows but he who receives it" (Revelation 2:17). Jesus Christ is our Bread from heaven. Come, let's feast on Him daily! We have life-sustaining fellowship as we abide in Him. He alone gives us grace and strength for each day. Could it be that we are now enjoying the heavenly food that we shall partake of in Christ for all eternity?

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