

Day By Day

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Exodus 16:4 Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may

Exodus 16:15 And when the children of Israel saw *it*, they said one to another, *It is manna*: for they knew not what it *was*. And Moses said unto them, *This is the bread which the LORD hath given you to eat.*

The miracle of manna stands as one of the great biblical attention-getters in the history of the Jews. The manner in which the Lord provided for these people to eat in the wilderness stands as a perfect testimony to the power of God and to the care which God has for His chosen people. Through all of time, God is the Great Provider for the children of the Kingdom. The more this truth sinks into our hearts, the more meaningful the oversight and providing power of God is in our lives.

This morning, we want to examine this account of manna and look at some aspects of it for the purpose of reminding ourselves about God's ability, willingness, and capacity to provide, and about His pattern or doing that.

I. This manna was a day-by-day provision

- ❖ The Lord is a better calculator of our daily needs than we will ever be
 - **Mat. 6:8** "... for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him."
- ❖ In promising and providing only provision for today, He weans us from long-range planning that is human-based and worldly
 - In **Luke 12**, there was a man who had a record harvest one year and Jesus told us that he "**thought within himself**" and came to the conclusion that he would not have room to store his enormous harvest, so he decided to tear down his old barns and build new ones...bigger so that he could have enough room. As he was thinking about this, he told himself also that he would have vast wealth so that he could relax, eat, drink, enjoy himself for many years to come. But the Lord said to him that he was a fool and that the very night he was facing he would die and never enjoy them. This is one scenario humans sometimes go through.
 - In **James 4**, we are warned that, rather than make such big plans about what

we are going to do, and without consulting with the Lord, we should rather approach planning like this: **James 4:14-15** Whereas ye know not what *shall be on the morrow*. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. **15** For that ye *ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that.*

- The difference between the man planning a business expansion in **Luke 12**, and the recipe for properly looking to the future given by James is that on the one hand the farmer predicted not only a long life, but also greater future increases in his wealth; on the other hand, the wise realizes that all this is in the hands of the Lord and may unfold differently.
- One lesson we can learn from these two situations is that from the perspective of personal need and personal life, there is no temporal tomorrow (**James 4:14** Whereas ye know not what *shall be* on the morrow. For what *is* your life? It is even a vapor, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away).
- ❖ Now, looking back at our text, we notice again that the manna was a daily event and the Lord gave enough manna for only that day. This is a lesson about relying on the Lord day by day, and we realize that the Lord is very aware of the human habit of **self-reliance without the Lord vs relying on Him**. Because of that, **forced reliance** is sometimes the only way we get the message about the transgression of self-reliance
 - (the manna represents a situation where Israel was in a place where there were no options)
 - How many times in our lives are we brought to the place where there were no human-made options before we were brought to lean only on the Lord for solutions?
 - Illustrate using the incident where Michael went missing as a toddler at Benny's in Graves County.

II. This manna was on the ground

- ❖ Things associated with God's perfect provision are often closely tied to the earth and its natural environment
 - In history, when God made an escape route for Israel to leave Egypt, it was a strong east wind that blew all night which He used to produce the environmental situation by which he rolled back the Red sea (**Exodus 14:21** "And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go *back* by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry *land*, and the waters were divided.").

- When God prepared a meeting place for Himself and Moses he used a simple bush to reveal a supernatural event to mark His presence and to prepare the business meeting (**Exodus 3:2-4**).
- It was dew placed first on a fleece, then on the ground around the fleece by the very hand of God that gave Gideon the confidence he needed to do the bidding of the Lord in fighting the Midianites (**Judges 6:37-40**)
- When Jesus provided tax money for Himself and his disciples, he sent Peter on a fishing trip and used a fish to deliver the necessary money (Matthew 17:27).
- The bread that Jesus taught us to ask for as a daily provision (**Mat. 6:11**) comes from the produce of the earth's soil (even the bread and flesh brought by ravens to Elijah (**1Kings 17**) had its origin in the soil of the earth.)
- We see this same principle in the natural things of earth and the universe in general: For instance, it is the atmosphere of earth that turns sunlight into usable energy by which the earth is replenished and things can survive and grow.
- So, God made the manna appear with the dew that settled on the grass. Why? Is there a simple message here?
 - Could the message be that any provision of God for His people is as simple for Him to produce as the dew upon the ground?
 - Even the devil knew that Christ could turn the stones on the ground there in the wilderness to bread if He wished.
 - Could another message here be that as certainly as the morning comes, we can expect God to take care of our needs?
 - We also have the imagery here that is a picture of security...the Israelites could lay down to sleep at night with the sense of security that there would be provisions tomorrow.

III. Making use of this manna required effort: (Exodus 16:21) And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating: and when the sun waxed hot, it melted.

- ❖ God does not operate a welfare state
 - God proves Himself faithful to his own principle which says (**2Thess. 3:10**) "...if any would not work, neither should he eat."
 - Even provisions from God that may be miraculous usually require effort on our part to make them useful. This is always true when we have the capacity to make the effort.
 - The incapacitated man at the pool of Bethesda: (**John 5:8**) "Rise, take up

- thy bed and walk.”
- The 10 lepers (**Luke 14:17**) “Go, show yourselves unto the priests.” (Said before they were cleansed). “... As they went they were cleansed.”
 - The man blind from birth: (**John 9:7**) “Go wash in the pool of Siloam...He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.”
 - At our house, we have rows and rows of fruit jars full of green beans that will provide food for us and for the church. They became useful food only after Diane spent hours picking and breaking the beans and then canning them.
- God could have made the manna appear in their pans and bowls during the night...but it fell on the ground and they were required to gather it. What lessons are here about the Lord’s way of providing for us?
- Look for the “manna”
 - Gather the manna when it is there (let us be reminded that when the sun got high enough to be hot, the manna melted...disappeared)
 - Another great spiritual lesson: The Lord’s provisions are timely, but our own spiritual or physical slovenliness may cost us the benefit of them.
 - An old German proverb says: “God gives, but man must open his hand”

IV. This manna was there without respect to where the people were located

- ❖ **Exodus 16:35** And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited; they did eat manna, until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan.
- No matter where you are, you are still a citizen of God’s Kingdom and so can look to Him to provide for you according to His way of doing things. (Isaiah 59:1) “Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear.

V. This manna gave the Jews every nutritional requirement

- ❖ There’s no mention that the Lord provided additional food for this horde of over one million people on the remainder of their journey. We are pretty certain that they found a few plants to eat, maybe a few animals to eat, but never enough to feed the entire population, or even a small part of it.
- Lesson: The providence of God will supply every thing you need to live your life for Him

VI. The benefit of this manna required appreciation

- ❖ We don't hear anything in the bible for some time after Israel started eating the manna, but finally in Numbers we start hearing complaints:
 - Numbers 21:5 And the people spoke against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for *there is no bread, neither is there any water*; and our soul loatheth this light bread.
 - With an attitude like this about manna, we hear only griping and resentment
 - On that day, the fall of manna upon the ground stopped being a blessing to those Jews
 - Lesson: Sometimes the people of God resent what they interpret as a frugal or narrow provisioning by the Lord. They may say, "It is the same old manna day in and day out. Why can't we get beyond this and end up with some luxuries?"
 - As with the Jews, this always begins with getting impatient with God; with feeling cheated by having needs provided-but not according to fleshly dictates; with feeling that things were unfair because they never had to go hungry-but it was the same thing all the time; instead of a plain but healthy meal, why couldn't it be caviar and cake, T-bone steak and sin pie?
 - ◆ Lesson: when we stop being grateful, there is a great possibility we will become the opposite...ingrates
 - ◆ When we begin to find fault with God's way of taking care of us we are sliding down a slippery slope of judging God and wrecking the opportunity to be blessed.

VII. This manna ceased when no longer needed

- ❖ Exodus 16:35 And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited; they did eat manna, until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan.
 - God does not continue to give you what you don't need (the problem with our thinking is often that we think we need when in fact, we do not. This is what the Israelites got into trouble about in **Numbers 11** when they felt like they just had to have some flesh to eat or they would perish)
 - Lesson: When we provoke God to give us something we desire with our flesh, it is usually a gift of chastisement.
 - Greatest spiritual lesson: If we advance in our spiritual journey to the place where we can appreciate greater spiritual bounty, God will provide

that too. (The children of Israel needed manna in the wilderness. But when they entered the Promised Land they had so much more to enjoy and be filled with. All a gift of God!

Exodus 16:31 And the house of Israel called the name thereof Manna: and it *was* like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it *was* like wafers *made* with honey.