

FEEDING ON BREAD FROM HEAVEN

The Church Prefigured in the OT

The Manna from Heaven

□ *Exodus 15-16*

- A month has elapsed since Israel left Egypt and they have run out of food. The people grumble over being hungry.
- God's response is to rain down bread out of heaven.
- God gives specific instructions regarding the gathering of the manna.
- Israel is told to preserve some of the manna so that subsequent generations might remember how God fed his people in the wilderness.
- Finally, we are told in verse 35 that "The sons of Israel ate the manna forty years, until they came to an inhabited land; they ate the manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan."



1 Month
Ex. 16

13 Month
Num. 11



The Manna from Heaven

□ ***Numbers 11***

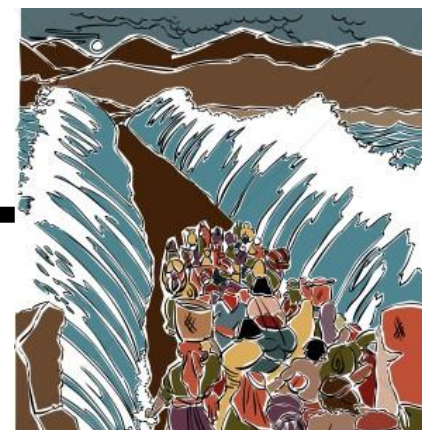
- In this passage, we find ourselves a little over a year later. Again the people are complaining.
- The result of this is that God sends meat but while they were chewing the meat, God struck them with a severe plague.



1 Month
Ex. 16

13 Month
Num. 11

40 Years
Deut. 8



The Manna from Heaven

□ ***Deuteronomy 8***

- ▣ Deut. 8 is an important passage because it gives us the theological reason for the manna.
- ▣ Deut. 8:3 take us back to two important truths in the first few chapters of Genesis: Life is created by God's word. Life is sustained by God's word. God's word makes alive but God's word also commands.





The Manna from Heaven

- ▣ The manna in this way was given to Israel to teach them about the creative and commanding power of God's word which resulted in two things:
 - It humbled the Israelites and taught them to depend on God and recognize his sovereignty over their own lives.
 - It humbled the Israelites by teaching them to obey and submit to God's word.

Jesus is the Bread of Life

□ *John 1*

- John begins his gospel in a provocative way. He gives the Word of Genesis 1 personality! The word with which God created all things is a person who is distinct from God and yet is equal to God.

Jesus is the Bread of Life

□ *John 6*

- Jesus miraculously feeds the 5,000.
- The next day, the people come looking for Jesus wanting another buffet.
- The rest of the chapter spins out of this. The people are thinking in physical terms about physical food that can fill their physical bellies. Jesus knows that they need spiritual food because they are spiritually starving. In order to explain what he means, Jesus is going to compare himself with the manna that Israel ate in the wilderness.

Jesus is the Bread of Life

□ *Parallels and Contrasts*

- The manna is a type of Jesus. Just as the manna came down from heaven, so Jesus has come from heaven, sent by God.
- The manna was given in order to sustain Israel. Jesus is the manna that gives life to the world (v. 33, 51).
- The manna came repeatedly, daily. Jesus came once for all.

Jesus is the Bread of Life

□ *Parallels and Contrasts*

- Israel ate the manna and drank the water. The proper response to Jesus as the bread of life is coming to him and believing in him (v. 35).
- God was sovereign over who ate the manna and when they ate the manna. In the same way, God is sovereign over who believes in Jesus.

Jesus is the Bread of Life

□ *Parallels and Contrasts*

- Israel reacted to God's provision by complaining. The Jews and even some of Jesus' disciples reacted to Jesus as the bread of life by grumbling and complaining (v. 41, 61).
- The manna in the wilderness did not prevent the Israelites from dying (v. 49, 58). Anyone who eats Jesus, the living bread, will live forever.

Application and Significance

- ***Israel is a type of the new covenant people of God who feed on Christ as the true bread from heaven.***
- **How do we eat and drink Christ?** We eat and drink Christ by coming to him and believing in him. Jesus established the meaning of the metaphors “eating and drinking”.
 - We will not come to him unless we sense our spiritual hunger. Those who come to him are those who realize they need bread.
 - To believe in Jesus means we believe he can meet our need. We believe he is the answer to our hunger.

Application and Significance

- ▣ **Leviticus 17:10-14** "If any one of the house of Israel or of the strangers who sojourn among them eats any blood, I will set my face against that person who eats blood and will cut him off from among his people. ¹¹ For the life of the flesh is in the blood, and I have given it for you on the altar to make atonement for your souls, for it is the blood that makes atonement by the life. ¹² Therefore I have said to the people of Israel, No person among you shall eat blood, neither shall any stranger who sojourns among you eat blood."

Application and Significance

- ***Israel is a type of the new covenant people of God who feed on Christ as the true bread from heaven.***
 - Jesus takes it to a deeper level. Notice how he steps up the language from verse 51 to verse 53. Eating and drinking Jesus is eating his flesh and drinking his blood. Jesus is using sacrificial language.
 - In other words, we don't just come to Jesus, we come to Jesus sacrificed for us. We recognize our need for his atoning work.
 - We don't just believe in Jesus, we believe in his sacrificial work. In other words, we are to appropriate Christ's sacrificial work by faith.

Application and Significance

- ***Israel is a type of the new covenant people of God who feed on Christ as the true bread from heaven.***
- Jesus is clearly speaking about salvation. But as he continues, he speaks of more than just a one-time conversion experience. He also speaks about a day by day continual feeding, a chewing on the sacrifice of Christ.

Application and Significance

- **John 6:53-54** So Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you **eat** (*aorist tense- an action without regard for time, often one-time event*) the flesh of the Son of Man and **drink** (*aorist*) His blood, you have no life in yourselves.
- ⁵⁴He who **chews** (*present tense- continual action*) My flesh and **drinks** (*present*) My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day."

Application and Significance

- ***Israel is a type of the new covenant people of God who feed on Christ as the true bread from heaven.***
 - The sacrifice of Jesus is spiritual food for believers. We cannot live spiritually healthy lives without coming back to the cross again and again, recognizing our need of cleansing, and appropriating his blood by faith.

Application and Significance

- ***God's provision of Christ as manna humbles our pride, removing our sense of self-sufficiency and exalting God's absolute sovereignty in salvation.***
- ▣ The provision of Jesus as manna teaches us the same lessons that the manna was supposed to teach Israel in the wilderness.
 - Jesus is the word that creates life!
 - Jesus is the word that sustains life!

Application and Significance

- ***Just as the manna was particular to the wilderness experience, so God's people are nourished by Christ during their stay on earth.***
 - ▣ Jesus situates his recipients outside of the Promised Land in the wilderness.
 - ▣ The church has not reached its promised home of a new heaven and a new earth. Yes, we have experienced God's salvation, yet we still live in environment that is hostile to our spiritual lives, to our faith. We need manna and God has provided him.

Application and Significance

- ***Israel's grumbling on account of the manna (and subsequent judgment) serves to warn God's people not to grumble over the spiritual diet God has provided.***
- **Charles Stevens:** "Nothing reveals what we really are in our spiritual state so much as our attitude toward the manna. Does Christ satisfy? Are we taken up with Him?"

Application and Significance

- ***Feeding on Christ results in eternal life.***
 - ▣ Eternal life, particularly in John's gospel, speaks of a quality of life. There is no genuine experience of life apart from Jesus Christ.

Application and Significance

- ***Feeding on Christ results in eternal life.***
 - It is a satisfying life. Jesus said that he who comes to him will not hunger and he who believes in him will never thirst.
 - It is an experience of intimacy with God. The mutual abiding speaks of complete identification with Christ and the enduring personal communion that flows from that identification (v. 56).
 - It is an enduring life. Jesus promises that our physical death does not spell the end. Jesus says that there is a day coming when he will personally raise us up (v. 40, 44, 54). We will receive new bodies and we will live forever with him.