

Manna and Miracles

Text: Exodus 16:1-8

Introduction:

1. An interesting event in Old Testament history was God's feeding the children of Israel with manna.
2. God called it "bread from heaven" or "food from the sky."
3. When the Israelites saw it, they asked, "What is it?"
4. The Hebrew word for this question is *man* – thus, it was referred to as *manna* (Exodus 16:15, 31).
5. It is described as a small, flakey thing covering the ground like frost – white, like coriander seed, and tasting like thin cakes made with honey (16:14, 31).
 - a. Coriander fruit or seed is small, about the size of a corn of pepper.
 - b. Later, manna is described as being the color of bdellium – a very pale yellow gum resin (Numbers 11:7).
 - c. It is also said to have a taste of fresh oil – referring to cakes made with oil and honey, being both juicy and sweet (Numbers 11:8).
6. This was something new, provided by God to feed and test the Israelites and to teach them dependence upon the Word of God (Deuteronomy 8:3, 16).
7. However, there are other important lessons that can be learned from manna...

I. MANNA

A. The Provision

1. Manna was provided by God (Exodus 16:4, 7-8; John 6:32).
2. It was something new that had not been seen before (Deuteronomy 8:3, 16).
3. It was evidence of God's provision for them in the wilderness (Exodus 16:32-34; Nehemiah 9:16-21).

B. The Purpose

1. It was to feed them in the wilderness (Exodus 16:3).
2. It was to test their faithfulness (Exodus 16:4; Deut. 8:2, 16).
3. It was to teach them dependence upon the Word of God (Deuteronomy 8:3; cf. Matthew 4:1-4).

C. The Period

1. God fed them with man for the duration of their time in the wilderness (Exodus 16:35).
2. But, once they inhabited the land of Canaan, the time of manna was ended (Joshua 5:10-12).

II. MIRACLES

A. The Provision

1. Miracles and miraculous abilities were given by God (Acts 2:17, 33, 38; John 3:34; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6).
2. The gifts were different, but all were designed to honor God and strengthen the church (1 Corinthians 12:7-13).
3. Despite this, there was a "more excellent way" (1 Corinthians 12:28-31).

B. The Purpose

1. Miracles demonstrated the deity of Jesus (John 9:30-33).
2. Miracles confirmed the truth of the Gospel (Mark 16:15-20; Hebrews 2:1-4).
3. Miracles encouraged faith (John 4:46-53; cf. 20:29).

C. The Period

1. Miracles were never primary under the Gospel (1 Corinthians 13:1-3).
2. Miracles were to come to a definite end (1 Cor. 13:8-13).
3. Miracles would cease when "that which is perfect is come."
 - a. The gender of the word for "perfect" is neuter – it does not refer to Jesus or any person.
 - b. The "perfect" is in contrast to that which is "in part" – knowledge and prophecy (the revelation of Truth).
 - c. When the revelation of Truth was complete, there would be no more need of miracles to confirm it.
4. The New Testament is the "perfect" or complete will of God (Hebrews 9:15-17; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; James 1:25; 2 Peter 1:3; Jude 3).

III. MESSAGE

- A. One might just as well pray for manna from heaven as to pray for a miracle today!
- B. Some say that God does not change; therefore, we should have miracles today (cf. Hebrews 13:8). **But what about manna?**
- C. Some say that to deny miracles is to doubt the power of the Holy Spirit. **But what about manna?**
- D. Some say that teaching that miracles have ended is just following church traditions. **But what about manna?**
- E. Some say that one who denies miracles today just doesn't "feel" the moving of the Holy Spirit. **But what about manna?**
- F. It is New Testament doctrine that the age of miracles has ended.
- G. The goal of the miraculous was to give man the Truth of Scripture.
- H. We must work to be diligent, devoted students of the Word of God.