

Subject: *Christ the Bread of Life*

Scripture: *Exodus 16:1-15*

The nation of Israel began the long journey between Egypt and the Promised Land of Canaan. They traveled through a barren wilderness where food and water were scarce. Yet God was faithful to meet their needs for 40 long years while they marched through this wilderness on the way to the Promised Land. Their story is our story. It's a picture of the believer and how God supplies our need through the Lord Jesus Christ. The entire Bible is about Jesus. Someone may ask, "Have you read the four Gospels?" You can say, "I've read all 66 of them." Jesus is found everywhere in the Word. What happened to God's people in the wilderness is a picture of what God does for us.

1. The problem of murmuring

When the people got hungry, they got hateful. In 1912, Pres. Woodrow Wilson made a speech in which he said, "No one can worship God or love his neighbor on an empty stomach." They began to remember Egypt and the flesh pots. They forgot the hard labor and slavery they had suffered. Just a month before, they had praised the Lord in song, but now they wished they had died by the Lord's hand. Compare vs. 3 to Ex. 15:6. When we fail to see God in our circumstances we can become negative and even bitter.

A. The people murmured against Moses and Aaron

B. The people longed for "the good old days" in Egypt

It has been said that "the good old days" are the product of a powerful imagination and a poor memory.

C. The people murmured against the Lord

They people murmured against God and He heard it. Be careful what you say because the Lord is always listening. The amazing thing about this story is not the murmuring of the people, but the mercy of God in protecting them and sustaining them along the way.

2. The provision of manna

Psalms 78:25 *Man did eat angels' food: he (God) sent them meat to the full.*

Psalms refers to the manna as "angels' food" and "bread of heaven." The manna is a clear picture of Christ. After He fed the multitude with the loaves and fishes, He revealed that He was like the manna that God gave to Israel, only better.

See ***John 6:26-35; 47-51***.

A. God provided manna from heaven

Manna was not imported from Egypt or made in the wilderness. It was God's gift from heaven. Like the manna, He was sent from God into this world. Over and over Jesus claimed to be from heaven: "The Father sent me."

John 6:32-33 *Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.*

B. God provided manna in the wilderness

This world is a wilderness, not a paradise. Yet Christ came into this sin-cursed world to save us and sustain us. God provided manna for forty years (vs. 35).

C. God provided manna for rebellious sinners

In verse 4, we might expect to read, “Behold, I will rain fire and brimstone down upon you.”

Romans 5:8 *But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*

D. Manna came down quietly like dew in the night

Just like the dew, the manna fell quietly during the night. Christ came without public fanfare during the night, and no one even noticed He had come except a few shepherds.

Isaiah 53:2 *For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.*

E. Manna was unique and supernatural

The word “manna” means “what is it?” Everywhere Christ went people tried to figure Him out—“Who is this man? Who is he?” There has never been anyone like Jesus. He is unique, one-of-a-kind (fully God and fully man).

F. Manna lay on the ground

The manna was small (vs. 14) and like frost on the ground. This is a picture of Christ’s humility. He was born in a cattle stall, laid in a feeding trough, was brought up in a poor family, and lived in a little country town, Nazareth.

G. Manna was round, white, and sweet tasting

The manna was round (vs. 14). This is a picture of Christ’s eternity. He had no beginning and He has no end. The manna was white (purity) and it tasted like wafers with honey (vs. 31). It looked perfect and tasted perfect.

Psalms 34:8 *O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.* Trusting Christ for salvation is not like taking a dose of bad medicine to get well. He is so good, so perfect. Too many people are enduring religion instead of enjoying salvation.

H. Manna was sufficient for all of God’s people

Someone has calculated that to supply an omer (about two quarts) of manna for 2 million people every day would require 4 freight trains with 60 cars each. Christ is sufficient for all people and for all time.

I. Manna was easy to gather

It was easy for them to access. The people didn't have to climb a mountain or cross a stream or go down into a cave. Christ is not far away and not hard to find.

Romans 10:6-9 ⁶ *But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:)* ⁷ *Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.)* ⁸ *But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;* ⁹ *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*

3. **The partaking of manna**

A. Every person could eat manna, but no one was forced to eat

The Israelites were hungry in the wilderness and it was a hunger only God could satisfy. Some people could have searched for another kind of food, but there was no food except the manna. Only Christ can give life and sustain life. It was only when the Prodigal Son said, "I perish with hunger!" that he decided to go home to his father.

B. Every person who ate manna had to stoop down to get it

Manna did not fall on tables or trees, but on the ground. Many people will not humble themselves to be saved. Pride sends more people to hell than anything else.

C. Every person had to eat manna for himself

No one was satisfied by just looking at the manna, admiring it, or watching others eat. Every person had to eat it for himself. Jesus must be personally received by faith.

John 6:51 *I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.*

D. Every person had to eat manna early in the day

The manna appeared in the morning, but later in the day when the sun was hot it melted (vs. 21). The manna would not keep until the next day (vs. 19-20), but it would breed worms and began to stink. What's even worse...if the people didn't gather the manna and eat it, they walked on it and trampled it down. What a picture of how this world treats Christ.

Isaiah 55:6 *Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near.*

E. Every person had to eat manna every day

The manna was their daily bread. God even made provision for the seventh day, the Sabbath. On the sixth day the people would gather a double portion and have enough for the seventh day, and God preserved the manna that day. This is a picture of how we live on Christ every day. We have a hunger that only He can satisfy.

The manna reminds us that our salvation is not a one time event, but a daily walk with Christ and trust in Christ. Salvation is not based on a plan or a prayer; salvation is based on the person and provision of life in Christ. The manna shows us that Christ is all we have and He is all we need.

F. Eating the manna was God's test of obedience

Eating the manna every day was God's test for His people then (vs. 4), and it's still God's test today. The test of our faith in Christ is not partaking of Him just once, but partaking of Him and depending on Him every day. When Jesus taught the people and told them He was the bread that God sent down from heaven, do you know what happened? John 6 tells us they left Him and walked with Him no more. Jesus then asked the twelve: "Will you also go away?" Peter said: "To whom shall we go, you have the words of eternal life."