

Manna

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Manna - Num 11:6; Josh 5:12; Psa 105:40; Ex 16.

1. Name. Manna means “What is it?” in the Hebrew. This is after the response of the Jews when they saw it for the first time.
2. Physical Description:
 - a. Ex 16:13-14,21 “and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the layer of dew evaporated, behold, on the surface of the wilderness there was a fine flake-like thing, fine as the frost on the ground... but when the sun grew hot, it would melt.”
 - b. Ex 16:20, “But they did not listen to Moses, and some left part of it until morning, and it bred worms and became foul; and Moses was angry with them.”
 - c. Ex 16:31, “And the house of Israel named it manna, and it was like coriander seed, white; and its taste was like wafers with honey.”
 - d. Num 11:7, “Now the Manna was like coriander seed, and its appearance like that of bdellium.”
 - e. Num 11:8, “The people would go about and gather it and grind it between two millstones or beat it in the mortar, and boil it in the pot and make cakes with it; and its taste was as the taste of cakes baked with oil.”
3. It was eaten for the duration of the wilderness experience of the children of Israel - Ex

Its cessation after 40 years was significant enough to be recorded by Joshua, Josh 5:12.

4. Manna was a miraculous grace provision from God, Ex 16:32, “Then Moses said, ‘This is what the Lord has commanded, ‘Let an omerful of it be kept throughout your generations, that they may see the bread that I fed

you in the wilderness, when I brought you out of the land of Egypt.’”

5. After a while the children of Israel became dissatisfied with the monotony of manna, Num 11:4-6, “And the rabble who were among them had greedy desires; and also the sons of Israel wept again and said, ‘Who will give us meat to eat? We remember the fish which we used to eat free in Egypt, the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic, but now our appetite is gone. There is nothing at all to look at except this manna.’”
 - a. Note that this was a rejection of the grace of God, and therefore called into question His Holy character.
 - b. Note the desire to return to Egypt. The Old Testament records the expression of this desire no less than eight times - it was probably muttered on many other occasions.
6. It was the Lord’s original plan to give the people meat for a month. So much so that it would come out of their nostrils. Moses failed to believe the Lord, and thus a plague was sent.
7. The lust of the rabble was met with quail by the millions - Num 11:31, “Now there went forth a wind from the Lord, and it brought quail from the sea, and let them fall beside the camp, about a day’s journey on this side and a day’s journey on the other side, all around the camp, and they spread them out for themselves all around the camp.”

- a. Those who went to gather quail would have had to go through the manna fall in order to reach the dead birds.
- b. After a day in the desert sun the quail was well past its prime. In fact, the plague struck those who were foolish enough to eat it. v.33, “While the meat was still between their teeth, before it was chewed, the anger of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord struck the people with a very severe plague.”
7. This punitive discipline was designed to wake up the Israelites and renew their dependence on logistical grace.
8. Christ used manna to illustrate the grace assets related to salvation and eternal life, John 6:31-33, “Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread out of heaven to eat.’ Jesus therefore 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.’”
9. The grumbling of Israel is analogous to any time that we call into question the grace provision of God, whether in spiritual or physical form.
10. This failure was memorialized by the placement of a pot of manna inside of the ark of the covenant. In spite of the failure, the covenant continued, covered by the ark of the covenant.