

## **Manna - Changing Our Diet**

### **I. The Reconstitution of God's People Exodus 16:2-4, 11-15; Num. 11:1, 4-6, 18-20, 31-34**

A. The Egyptian diet denotes the worldly things and amusements that people feed on in order to find satisfaction.

B. In Egypt the children of Israel had eaten only Egyptian food; hence, they had become Egyptian in both their constitution and their appetite.

1. Their desire for Egyptian food indicates that their experience of redemption through the Passover lamb and the exodus from Egypt with the crossing of the Red Sea had not changed their inward constitution and worldly taste.

2. Contrary to God's desire, the people wanted to live the same way as they had lived in Egypt.

### **II. Experiencing Christ As Our Diet**

A. Christ is the heavenly manna. **John 6:30-35; John 6:57; John 6:27**

**1. Appetite follows our diet - John 6:27; Jer. 15:16**

**2. Reading and praying over the Bible - Matt. 4:4; John 6:63; Eph. 6:17-18**

**3. Time with the Lord in the morning - Exo. 16:21; Lam. 3:22-23; Psa. 5:3**

**4. Gathered together with companions - Matt. 18:20; 2Tim. 2:22**

**5. Build up a daily habit - Exo. 16:4; 2Cor. 4:16**

### **Reconstituting His Redeemed Ones through a Change of Diet**

In Exodus 16 manna was sent from heaven to be food for God's people. For forty years in the wilderness, they depended on manna for sustenance. By giving His people manna to eat, God indicated that His intention was to change the nature of His people. He wanted to change their being, their very constitution. They had already undergone a change of location. Formerly, they were in Egypt. Now, they were with the Lord in the wilderness, a place of separation. However, it is not sufficient merely to have a change of location, for this is too outward and too objective. There must also be an inward, subjective change, a change of life and nature. Therefore, the way for God to produce such a change in His people is by changing their diet. By eating Egyptian food God's people had been constituted with the element of Egypt. Although they had been

brought out of Egypt into the wilderness of separation, they were still constituted with the element of Egypt. God's intention was to change their element by changing their diet. God wanted to feed them with food from heaven in order to reconstitute them. His desire was to fill them, to satisfy them, to satiate them with food from heaven, and thereby to make them a heavenly people.

When we come to chapter sixteen, we see the importance of being reconstituted. In chapter twelve God's people were redeemed, and in chapter fourteen they were delivered. But although they had been redeemed, saved, rescued, delivered, and freed, and although their needs had been supplied, there was still the need for them to be reconstituted. God's people need a new constitution. The main point in chapter sixteen is not redemption, deliverance, or even supply. The focal point of this chapter is reconstitution through a change of diet.

### **Manna Being a Type of Christ**

The main point in Exodus 16 is the eating of manna. This chapter does not deal with behavior, conduct, or self-improvement; it deals with eating. In John 6 the Lord Jesus clearly said that He was the real manna, sent from heaven by God the Father to be food for God's chosen people. Therefore, it is vital for us to learn how to eat Him. In verse 32 the Lord Jesus said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, Moses has not given you the bread out of heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread out of heaven." Then the Lord went on to say that the one who eats Him will live because of Him (v. 57). Manna is also mentioned in Revelation 2:1, where we are told that the Lord will "give of the hidden manna" to the one who overcomes. These verses help us to see that in the Bible the concept of eating is basic and central.

We all realize that in order to live properly we need to eat properly. If we take in poison, for example, we shall surely die. Some have even said that a person's diet can affect his temper. According to this idea, a child's temper in particular can be affected by his diet.

This illustrates the importance of the proper spiritual eating. Surely if we partake of Christ as the real manna, we shall find it difficult to lose our temper. This heavenly food causes our lusts to be restricted. It also deals with our selfish ambition. On the one hand, the heavenly manna nourishes us and heals us; on the other hand, it eliminates the negative things in

us. Because eating is such a crucial matter, the regulating of man's diet is another basic concept in the Bible.

### **Reconstitution for God's Building**

Although the children of Israel had been redeemed and delivered, they were still Egyptian in their constitution. The cells and the fibers of their being were Egyptian in nature. As far as constitution is concerned, there was no difference between them and the Egyptians. The children of Israel had been saved, redeemed, rescued, and supplied, but their constitution was altogether the same as the Egyptians. God could never use such material for His heavenly dwelling place. Therefore, God gave them manna to change their diet that they might become a new constitution through their eating. Today Christ has come from God to be our real food, and God has changed our food from something worldly to Christ Himself. We need to eat Him and drink of Him that He may enter into us organically to become our inner constituents that we may be built as God's habitation.

God's desire is to use His people as the material for the building of His habitation on earth. However, although the people were no longer in Egypt, they were still Egyptian in their constitution. Their tissue was Egyptian. They were a composition of the Egyptian element, for they grew up in Egypt and were raised on the Egyptian diet of cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions, and garlic. Everything they ate was Egyptian. God's intention is not to bring a number of redeemed Egyptians into the heavens. He may deliver from Egypt those who have an Egyptian constitution, but He will not bring such people into His dwelling place. In order to be the material for His habitation, His people must be reconstituted. Like the children of Israel, we today have been delivered out of Egypt, out of the world, but in our nature and constitution we are still worldly. Therefore, it is necessary for us to grasp the crucial point in chapter sixteen concerning the change of constitution.

#### **Questions:**

1. What was God's purpose in sending the manna? How does manna change us?
2. What is the Egyptian diet and what does it include?
3. What are some ways we can eat manna?
4. Give a recent experience of how you were restricted or restrained by God after eating manna (Christ).

Verse Sheet:

Exo. 16:2 And the whole assembly of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron in the wilderness.

Exo. 16:3 And the children of Israel said to them, If only we had died by the hand of Jehovah in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots, when we ate bread to the full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole congregation with hunger.

Exo. 16:4 Then Jehovah said to Moses, I will now rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether or not they will walk in My law.

Exo. 16:11 And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying,

Exo. 16:12 I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel. Speak to them, saying, At twilight you will eat flesh, and in the morning you will be filled with bread; and you shall know that I am Jehovah your God.

Exo. 16:13 And at evening quails came up and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp.

Exo. 16:14 And when the layer of dew lifted, there upon the surface of the wilderness were fine round flakes, fine as the frost on the earth.

Exo. 16:15 And when the children of Israel saw it, they said to one another, What is it? For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, It is the bread which Jehovah has given you to eat.

Num. 11:1 And the people became like those who murmur about their misfortune in the ears of Jehovah; and when Jehovah heard it, His anger was kindled, and the fire of Jehovah burned among them and consumed some at the outskirts of the camp.

Num. 11:4 And the mixed multitude that was among them lusted exceedingly; and the children of Israel also wept again and said, Who shall give us meat to eat?

Num. 11:5 We remember the fish which we used to eat in Egypt for nothing, the cucumbers and the melons and the leeks and the onions and the garlic;

Num. 11:6 But now our appetite has gone; there is nothing at all but this manna to look at.

Num. 11:18 And you shall say to the people, Sanctify yourselves for tomorrow, and you shall eat meat; for you have wept in the ears of Jehovah, saying, Who will give us meat to eat? For it was well with us in Egypt. Therefore Jehovah will give you meat, and you shall eat.

Num. 11:19 You shall eat not one day, nor two days, nor five days, nor ten days, nor twenty days,

Num. 11:20 But a whole month, until it comes out from your nostrils and becomes loathsome to you, because you have rejected Jehovah who is among you and have wept before Him, saying, Why did we ever come out of Egypt?

Num. 11:31 And a wind went forth from Jehovah and brought quails 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 about two cubits above the surface of the earth.

Num. 11:32 And the people rose up all that day and all the night and all the next day, and they gathered the quail. He who gathered least gathered ten homers. And they spread them out for themselves all around the camp.

Num. 11:33 While the meat was still between their teeth, before it was chewed, the anger of Jehovah was kindled against the people, and Jehovah struck the people with a very severe plague.

Num. 11:34 And the name of that place was called Kibroth-hattaavah because there they buried the people who lusted.

John 6:30 They said then to Him, What sign then will You do that we may see and believe You? What work will You do?

John 6:31 Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, as it is written, "He gave them bread out of heaven to eat."

John 6:32 Jesus therefore said to them, Truly, truly, I say to you, Moses has not given you the bread out of heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread out of heaven.

John 6:33 For the bread of God is He who comes down out of heaven and gives life to the world.

John 6:34 They said therefore to Him, Lord, give us this bread always.

John 6:35 Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall by no means hunger, and he who believes into Me shall by no means ever thirst.

John 6:57 As the living Father has sent Me and I live because of the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live because of Me.

John 6:27 Work not for the food which perishes, but for the food which abides unto eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you; for Him has the Father, even God, sealed.