

THE MANNA CEASES

The children of Israel had been slaves in Egypt for 430 years. In one day, on a day set apart by God, they were physically delivered out that land...out of the place of bondage. Exodus 13:40-42 says: *“The time that the people of Israel lived in Egypt was 430 years. At the end of 430 years, on that very day, all the hosts of the LORD went out from the land of Egypt. It was a night of watching by the LORD, to bring them out of the land of Egypt...”* These people literally crossed the Red Sea, walking through on dry land with walls of water being supernaturally held back on both sides. As they touched the other side, the waters came crashing down completely annihilating their enemies and God’s people were finally set free. What an amazing sight! What a glorious deliverance!

They were delivered in a single day from 430 years in Egypt. However, it took the Lord 40 years to get Egypt out of them. Sadly, it was a journey that should have lasted approximately eleven days. As the journey to the Promised Land progressed, they became dissatisfied with their conditions. They grumbled and complained and even longed for the days of Egypt. Yet supernatural events were happening before their eyes daily. Not only had they walked through the Red Sea on dry land, the Lord led them with a cloud by day and a fire by night, guiding their every step and direction. During that time they were fed manna from heaven. Each morning, as they would awaken, there would be a fresh supply of manna awaiting them. The Word says that their shoes and clothes didn’t wear out. They witnessed the glory that shone on Moses’ face when he’d been with the Lord. Throughout all of this, they still were dissatisfied, disobedient and ungrateful...longing to return to Egypt. Egypt was still in their hearts.

Holy Spirit brought to me one specific area regarding their heart condition. In Numbers 13, after many years of traveling, they were on the brink of entering into the Promised Land. They were camped right there on the edge ready to cross over. The Lord told Moses to send a group of men to spy out the land and bring back a report. Moses obeyed and the men returned saying,

“We went into the land to which you sent us, and it does flow with milk and honey! Here is its fruit. But the people who live there are powerful, and the cities are fortified and very large. We even saw descendants of Anak there. The Amalekites live in the Negev; the Hittites, Jebusites and Amorites live in the hill country; and the Canaanites live near the sea and along the Jordan.” Numbers 13: 27-29

In spite of the goodness of the land, their focus was on the giants. Caleb, one of the spies, silenced the people and their negativity. He recommended that they go in and possess the land immediately. Fear plagued them and the next passage exposed the ‘Egypt’ in their hearts.

*“We saw the Nephilim there (the descendants of Anak come from the Nephilim). **We seemed like grasshoppers in our own eyes, and we looked the same to them.**”* Numbers 13:33

What a sad statement! After all the Lord God had brought them through, after knowing they were a chosen people, they still saw themselves as inferior and small. They had witnessed such

power and had such provision and protection throughout their journey. Yet they still saw themselves as grasshoppers and consequently, so did their enemy. You see, Caleb and Joshua were the only ones that had a true picture of their identity. They were the only ones that believed it could really happen. Because of this, they were the only ones of the original assembly that God allowed to enter the Promised Land. Until that time came, there were many more days of traveling around and around the mountain in the wilderness. They were still being somewhat protected and still being fed manna daily but they were merely going in circles.

The journey progresses in Joshua 5. After 40 years, Joshua led the party across the Jordan (again on dry land) into the Promised Land. There must have been such ecstasy as their feet touched the ground on that side of the Jordan River. Don't you know they spoke of the years of wilderness travel? Don't you imagine there were some tears as they thought of loved ones who longed for this day but, because of rebellion, never got to experience the beauty? And now, they were there. One of the sweetest passages of scripture to me is Joshua 5:9. The Lord told Joshua, "**Today, I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.**" What a powerful statement. Again, what a beautiful deliverance! What a beautiful promise! They had been removed from Egypt 40 years earlier but on this day, Egypt, and the reproach of it, was removed from them. WOW!

Shortly after their entrance, they ate from the fruit of the land for the first time. Remember the fruit that Caleb, Joshua and the other spies described long ago? Finally, they were eating from that. It was no longer just a dream...they were living it.

Joshua 5:11: The day after the Passover, that very day, they ate some of the produce of the land: unleavened bread and roasted grain.

For 40 years they had eaten manna. Manna was supernatural provision directly from the hand of God. It was nourishment from Heaven. But after all those years, I'm sure the fruit of the land tasted so sweet. The day of the manna had ceased!! The wilderness was behind them.

Joshua 5:1: The manna stopped the day after they ate this food from the land; there was no longer any manna for the Israelites, but that year they ate the produce of Canaan.

Let's look at the events from the Exodus to the Promised Land. It's easy to say, "That's an amazing story!" but what can we glean from it? We are born in sin much like they were born in slavery. We are literally born into the kingdom of darkness...satan's kingdom. Just like the children of Israel were delivered from Egypt in a single day, when we are born again, we are delivered in a single moment out of the kingdom of darkness and transferred into the Kingdom of Light. Unfortunately, while we are no longer citizens of satan's kingdom, there is still some of that kingdom in us...in our soul and body. The next leg of the journey is allowing Holy Spirit to deliver us from the bondages that are still in us as we walk it out...much like the walking it out in the wilderness. Our attitudes, our thought patterns, our speech, our actions...*our hearts*...have to be transformed by the Master. Our Father loves us so much that throughout these times of wilderness walking, He provides for us in every way. We get to experience supernatural things. We get to see miracles, signs and wonders. He feeds us. He clothes us. He heals us. He is continually delivering us. He leads us. He gives us dreams and visions. He showers us with His love. Then one day we look up and realize we are standing on the border of

the Promised Land. We are seeing the goodness and the extravagance of the land on the other side of the river. We are seeing that it can be better than anything we've ever known...even better than the supernatural manna the Father supplied. The promises in the Word are becoming alive and real to us and we are realizing that they are a part of a covenant that He will not break. However, we will also see the enemy and the battle that lies before us. Because you see, God promised them the victory just like He does us, but He said 'GO and TAKE possession of it'. There will be a battle. We know that according to the promises, we will win; but we will see the giants. The question is, *how will we see ourselves while we're looking at the giants?* Will we be grasshoppers in our own eyes? Or will we see ourselves as children of a living God, victorious in every way? Will we advance and possess the land as though our enemies are under our feet or will we retreat? When Joshua, Caleb and the assembly saw themselves in light of who they truly were in Christ, they moved forward in courage and in power.

I believe in this new year many of us are standing on the shore and looking over into the Promised Land. We have seen miraculous things in our lives and in the lives of the Garden family and are so thankful for them. But we know there is even more. We are literally standing at the water's edge in the spirit. When those waters part, if we will but walk through, destroying all doubt and unbelief, the Father will say to us, too, "***Today, I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.***" and we will begin to eat of the *full* fruit of the land...the land flowing with milk and honey...the land with clusters of fruit so full it can't be carried...miracles, signs and wonders beyond imagination. On that day the manna will cease. The days of the same thing over and over will be no more. What really happened that day is that they stepped into the MORE.

Remember Caleb? It all boiled down to Caleb's heart. Numbers 14 says,

“²⁴ But because my servant Caleb has a different spirit and follows me wholeheartedly, I will bring him into the land he went to, and his descendants will inherit it.”

Glory to God!!! Those who died in the wilderness had divided hearts. When the going got tough they talked of returning to Egypt. When the giants looked too big, Egypt was still an option in their minds. Their mindset never stopped being that of a slave...that of a grasshopper...that of reproach. But Caleb had a different spirit and he followed wholeheartedly. Caleb saw himself as a warrior under God's mighty hand. Caleb tasted of the glory....Caleb crossed over and lived in the MORE.

Where are you in your personal exodus? Are you still in Egypt? Are you longing for Egypt? Or, are you standing on the water's edge looking at the endless possibilities of the Promised Land? It's easy to look at the story of the exodus and say, "Man, these people complained a lot. What were they thinking? How much did they have to see before they believed? After the supernatural deliverance, couldn't they tell they were a chosen people?" Hmmm...how much do we have to see before we believe? Don't we realize we are a chosen people?" It isn't called the Promised Land for nothing. I believe we can see a year like we've never seen before if we will step into the water and take possession of our inheritance. The manna can cease today!