



He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it. (Rev 2:17)

Though the above verse from the Revelation of Jesus Christ may sound a bit arcane to casual reader, it need not be. It is pregnant with meaning and substance which will be revealed in our further devotion today.

You will recall that God sent down manna from heaven to the Children of Israel who were famishing in the wilderness. They raised their murmuring voices against Moses and Aaron (but indirectly against the Lord).

And it came to pass, as Aaron spake unto the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and, behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God. And it came to pass, that at even the quails came up, and covered the camp: and in the morning the dew lay round about the host. And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground. And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, It is manna: for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the LORD hath given you to eat. This is the thing which the LORD hath commanded, Gather of it every man according to his eating, an omer for every man, according to the number of your persons; take ye every man for them which are in his tents. And the children of Israel did so, and gathered, some more, some less. And when they did mete it with an omer, he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack; they gathered every man according to his eating. And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning. Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and stank: and Moses was wroth with them. And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating: and when the sun waxed hot, it melted. (Ex 16:10-21)

This Manna of the Exodus was the physical bread God sent down from Heaven, but it was more descriptive of that spiritual Bread of Life that God would send down from Heaven some 1450 years later – the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ came at a time when the world was famishing for the spiritual food that nourishes the soul of man. The world was in a Wilderness of Sin much like that Wilderness of Sin mentioned in Exodus. (Ex 16:1) The physical provisions of the Old Testament point to those spiritual provisions granted in the New.

Let us examine the characteristics of this Manna of Exodus:

1. Like our Lord Jesus Christ, it came from the Father in Heaven and was prepared in Heaven.
2. It came as a free gift of grace just as the very Author of Grace came down and died as our Redeemer. It was given to all who would receive it – rich, poor, men, women, children, and rulers. The Manna that descended was covered (or hidden) by the dew. The Dew of the Holy Spirit unveils Christ to us. *“That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; 17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, (Eph 3:16-17)*
3. Manna did not come to the Children of Israel while they were yet in bondage in Egypt (a type for sin) just as Christ comes to none who desire to remain in bondage to sin.
4. It came in small form just as Jesus came as a Babe in the Manger.
5. It was white which also represents the purity of Jesus Christ.
6. It distilled as silently as the dew representing the characteristics of the Holy Ghost.
7. It was just enough for the daily Bread of the people which Jesus is to us. We cannot hoard up measures of the Holy Spirit for future times, but must be fed the Bread (Word of God) daily. An old sermon is just as dead and full of worms as old manna.
8. It came early, even before the Sun, just as we are to seek the Father’s favor and love. (Psalms 63:1)
9. The Manna of the wilderness required gathering just as the Word of God requires daily study.

Now, the Manna that comes down from Heaven as the Bread of Life is no mystery to those who have ears to hear and eyes to see; but it is a mystery to those who stop their ears and cover their eyes. Fish that live for centuries in darkness grow scales over the eyes for lack of use. So are many who cannot, or will not, see the wonders of God and His Creation. *“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. Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.”* (John 6:32-35)

How does the Hidden Manna of our Lord Jesus Christ nourish and justify? First of all, to be of benefit, one must hear the Word: *“He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith.”* Ears and eyes are the two organs through which the greater amount of learning takes place. *“So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”* (Romans 10:17) We must KNOW if we are to BELIEVE. *“My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.”* (Hosea 4:6)

Secondly, unlike the Manna of the Exodus, when we feed upon Christ, we take upon ourselves His nature and likeness. When we feed upon the Bread of Life, we will have enduring and overcoming faith: *“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna.”*

Thirdly, we are made righteous by the 'imputed righteousness' of our Lord Jesus Christ. We are justified by His substitutionary death on the cross. ". . . *and will give him a white stone.*" It is for this reason that we are given a "White Stone." What does the "White Stone" mean? In biblical times, when one went before the judges, there was either a white or a black stone placed in a basket as a verdict of innocence or guilt. The White Stone signified innocence in the eyes of the law. We are justified and accounted innocent before the Law of Grace.

Fourthly, what shall we be given in the White Stone? ". . . *and in the stone a new name written.*" No longer will we be burdened by these worldly names of ill-repute which have followed us from birth to death. We are given a new and untarnished name – a name which is clear and free of any bad report. No one will even know the new name and, therefore, cannot utter an iota of gossip against it. ". . . *which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.*"

Have you known the nourishing benefits of the Hidden Manna? Is it yet hidden to your darkened eyes, or has the Light of the World revealed it to you? Have you gathered the Manna daily for the nourishment of your soul, or does your Bible gather dust from one Sunday to the next?

God has made amazing provision for us in sending prophets whom the world has murdered and who recorded God's Word for us at great cost. It is the great cost to God that makes His Word so important and valuable to us. He has even sent His only Begotten Son as the Word Incarnate to us to die a horrible death on the cross for us; yet, we deem it too much trouble to consult that Word daily. We thereby trample it under foot, and offend the Sovereign of Heaven.

Is God's Manna still Hidden to you, friend?