

New Life Family Matters

God's Word: our certainty and security in troubled times.

"The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God stands forever."

Isa 40:8 NIV

"It is written: 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Matt 4:4 NIV

One only has to quickly scan the daily newspaper, turn on the local radio station or a TV news station for a few minutes in order to have a heart quickly filled with uncertainty and apprehension. Like every generation before us, life in the early 21st century has had its share of bad news: natural disasters, teenage gunmen, Wall Street woes, international terrorism, and sky rocketing living costs -to name just a few. Daily living in such an uncertain environment is a challenge for everyone and for those of us who desire to live a life that testifies to our neighbors that Jesus is alive it necessitates having an eternal source of hope, peace and joy. To our generation, like the many that has inhabited our planet before us, our Heavenly Father has generously and graciously offered His Word as a food for the soul that promises security and provision. How do we appropriate and experience these God-given provisions -an example from Israel's history teaches us.

Shortly after being freed by God through an amazing act of rescue from their life of slavery in Egypt, Israel found herself living in the desert without a daily supply of food or water. Like most of us when faced with trying circumstances, they began to complain about their situation. The cry that reached the ears of their Rescuer was one of critical unbelief rather than faith-filled, passionate prayer. Did God know their situation -yes. Did He have a plan to provide for them -yes. Did He allow this to test their hearts -yes! But it wasn't that He didn't know what was in their hearts, it was a test to reveal to them what was in their hearts. God often uses life to reveal to us what is in our hearts -will we trust Him, or will we continue to trust in ourselves, a human institution, or an earthly resource? Israel had no where else to turn and instead of turning to the One who just miraculously rescued them from Pharaoh's ruthless rule, they began to complain. God graciously provided water (see Exodus 15 & 17) and a daily supply of food called manna. Manna was an oatmeal-like food that appeared daily on the ground and had to be gathered by the Israelites. Five days a week, they were to gather enough for their family for that day, and on the sixth day they were to gather enough for two days, because on the Sabbath they were to rest and worship the Lord. God's provision of manna and the necessity of gathering it daily provides us with a simply but profound example of appropriating "divine provisions" for everyday living. We are offered His Written Word as food for the soul -an ever present source of nourishment and refreshing for our heart. Isaiah, the prophet declared that God's Word is sure, steadfast, and eternally certain. It is our *"hope... an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, 20 where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf."* (Heb 6:19-20 NIV) Jesus tells us in the verse I wrote

above that only one source of life has the ability to meet the daily needs of the human heart - God's Word. This "life source" has the ability to bring peace, hope and joy to the human heart, and like the example of manna from Israel's history, our part is to "gather enough" on a daily basis -this is an act of faith that bears great fruit within every area of our lives. If you haven't begun the practice of "feeding" daily on God's Word, I'd like to help you develop this practice through using our "Life Journals." Give me a call or contact me by email. One last thought, David said this, "*I rejoice in your promise like one who finds great spoil.*" Ps 119:162 NIV

Pastor Dave