

Call to Obedience #125/ #519
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Do You Live On Quail Or Manna?

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The people asked, and He brought quail, and satisfied them with the bread of heaven (Ps. 105:40) In this passage, you can learn that there is a permissive will of God and that there is a perfect will of God. To state it in the context of this verse, God's permissive will was quail and God's perfect will was manna.

Quail represents what Self wants and manna represents what God wants. A wind of the Lord blew in quail from a bird migration route (Num. 11:31), whereas manna was created new each day, except on the Sabbath, by God Almighty. Quail had seeds of corruption and death in it. Manna had the seeds of life and health in it. There was nothing harmful to man in manna. Nothing! The manna contained no bacteria, no viruses, nothing infectious and there was nothing imperfect within it. Nothing needed to be removed from the manna before it was prepared to be eaten. When it was delivered, none of it had ever touched the earth before the morning it was collected. None of its ingredients were from the earth because it was not grown in the earth. All of it was from heaven. Hallelujah! It was all good, all pure and all perfect—until it was mishandled. When it was mishandled, *it bred worms and stank* (Ex. 16:20). This fact leads to another lesson that you can learn: when God's perfect will is mishandled, beware!

Israel asked for meat, and God gave them quail. There is more in quail that you cannot eat than you can eat because they have bones, feathers, beaks, claws and intestines. To enjoy eating a quail, you must cut off its head, wings and feet, pluck off the feathers (or skin the bird) and then remove the stomach and intestines. All of these inedible items have to be discarded somewhere or buried. If they are not buried, these waste products will soon be full of maggots and flies resulting in undesirable odors in just a few days.

But, dear ones, the fact of the matter is that most religious people have been wanting quail, the permissive will of God, ever since the Fall—and man has been having trouble properly disposing of the refuse of quail ever since sin entered into his heart. God's people have polluted the church with quail and so there are maggots and flies in practically every religious institution of man: *The people asked, and he brought quails, and satisfied them with the bread of*

heaven. The Psalmist says that Israel asked [for meat] and God gave them quail. How badly did Israel want meat? They wept in the ears of God for it (Num. 11:4, 13, 18). They wanted it so badly that they wore Moses down with their crying after it. Many ministers are worn down and worn out simply because their congregations are lusting for meat (quail). The fact that most true servants of God need frequent times away from their flocks indicates that there is much weeping in the ears of God for things that satisfy the flesh of their parishioners. Israel asked God for meat, and God gave them quail. God was unable to do much with Israel until He had given them their desire. There was no further progress possible until the children of Israel had gotten beyond their desire for meat. God sent the quail to satisfy Israel's lust for meat and to teach all the rest of mankind a lesson.

Many times, someone will want a certain spouse, or a certain house, or a certain car, or a certain vacation—and their desire for that person or item is so great that there will be no spiritual progress in their life until their desire is either crucified or fulfilled. If they are not willing to take their desires to the cross and look for God's perfect will, God will meet their desires as He met Israel's desire for meat by sending quail: *Now a wind went out from the LORD, and it brought quail from the sea and left them fluttering near the camp, about a day's journey on this side and about a day's on the other side, all around the camp, and about two cubits above the surface of the ground. And the people stayed up all that day, all night, and all the next day, and gathered quail (he who gathered least gathered ten homers); and they spread them out for themselves all around the camp* (Num. 11:31-32). Ten homers is equal to 80 bushels. Do you think the children of Israel were praising God and jumping for joy because God had answered their prayers, exceedingly, abundantly, above all they could ask or think?

Well, dear ones, I have been a Christian for many years and I have heard many answers to prayer in church testimony meetings like the following: "The Lord has heard our prayer. He has provided exactly what we asked for: a lovely home with three bedrooms in the country." For someone else it was perfectly matching furniture, just the colors they wanted. They had looked for it all across the country and finally found it at half price. Or take this testimony: "I just found that tall, young man I always wanted!" Someone else found the car they always wanted. Yes, they received what they wanted. Praise the Lord!? Seldom have I ever been able to share the joy of those believers who, through prayer, got their heart's desires. How can I rejoice when people sleep in quail pajamas, put on quail shoes, wear quail suits, drive quail cars, live in quail

homes, eat at quail tables, watch quail television programs and go on quail vacations with quail spouses? You need to seek what God wants and not what Self wants.

Wonderful things and marvelous things are waiting for those who seek His kingdom first (Matt. 6:33). But, dear ones, you must wait on God so that He can lead you to those people or things which will bless you. Ask Him to help you to avoid those things containing seeds of corruption and death. Oh, how great it would be if you were married to a manna spouse, lived in a manna house and drove manna cars. But to get manna, God's perfect will, you must stop lusting. If your heart is not entirely sanctified, you will be asking for things which will bring leanness to your soul: *But while the meat was still between their teeth, before it was chewed, the wrath of the LORD was aroused against the people, and the LORD struck the people with a very great plague. So he called the name of that place Kibroth hattaavah, because there they buried the people who had yielded to craving* (Num. 11:33-34). They received their heart's desire. Again, unless you are entirely sanctified, your heart's desires are dangerous—those desires carry within them the seeds of disappointment, corruption and death. Israel had to learn that by experience, but you do not need to learn that by experience. You can learn from history! Oh, how blessed you are when you learn from history rather than experience.

God's perfect will for Moses was that he would speak to the rock and it would bring forth water (Num. 20:7). In anger, Moses struck the rock twice and water then gushed out so that the congregation and animals could drink. Because Moses disobeyed God's command, he was not permitted to lead the children of Israel into the Promised Land (Num. 20:12). Only eternity will reveal all the material things, all the revelations, all the blessings and all the ministries that God's people were shut out of because they accepted God's permissive will instead of seeking His perfect will. Every time you get into God's permissive will by lusting, by pressing, by impatience, by anger or by self-interest, you are shutting yourselves out of things that are better and more wonderful: *...Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love him* (1 Cor. 2:9). It is a serious thing to be in the middle of God's permissive will. If you do not choose the cross while seeking God's perfect will, you will suffer the consequences of your choices for doing God's permissive will. If you give a testimony, be sure it is a testimony of God's perfect will happening in your life and not of your unsanctified desires having been met.

I believe that about 70 percent of all of man's troubles are the result of him not seeking to do God's perfect will. You will all experience troubles and God will send them your way so that you can learn to press through and gain victory over them. God will spare you from most of them if you keep your eyes fastened upon Him.

In closing, I must give you a word of encouragement. Even though you may be standing in quail three feet deep when it comes to your life—your car, your home, your marriage or your job—God can help you. God cannot or will not erase the consequences of your wrong choices that you made in your past because of your desire and persistence in seeking His permissive will. You will reap what you have sown. That is both a natural law and a spiritual law. But you can: 1) repent; 2) stop sowing bad seed; 3) receive God's grace to bear the scars of your past; and 4) learn to be perfect in the midst of quail. The situations and the circumstances in your life may be due to wrong choices your ancestors made decades or centuries ago resulting in repercussions. If that is the case in your life, you must then settle for God's permissive will in those areas. But if your motives are pure, God will bless and sanctify you even when you are in the middle of His permissive will, and there will be many other choices you can make to invite more and more of God's perfect will into your life. Make the best of every situation in your life and do not add more quail to your life than you already have. Seek to do the perfect will of God which will bring satisfaction to your life forever.

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