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I Will Rain Down Manna from Heaven for You

16: 4-12

I will rain down manna from heaven for you DIG: Read 16:4 and John 6:57-61, 66. In both instances, how does God test whether or not His followers will walk in His word? How do you account for the presence of manna? Do you think it was a natural food or something unique and supernatural?

REFLECT: What is the difference between your wants and your needs? How has God provided for your needs? I was young and now I am old, yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken, or their children begging for bread (Psalm 37:25). Is this true?

When **the Israelites grumbled** under the slavery **of Egypt**, Pharaoh made their lives harder by making them find their own straw. But here **God** met their grumbling with a gracious promise. **Then ADONAI said to Moses His prophet: I will rain down bread from heaven for you.** This **bread** from **heaven** would be remembered and celebrated for generations to come (**Psalm 78:24-25, 105:40; Nehemiah 9:15; John 6:31**).³⁰² When **God** refers to it in the Bible, **He** always refers to it as **bread**; but when **the Israelites** refer to it, they always refer to it as **manna (16:31)**. What providential care! **God** took care of **the Israelites** in somewhat the same fashion as **He** had in the garden of Eden (**Genesis 2:8-16**). They received **bread** without toil.



The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day and no more. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow My instructions (16:4). The purpose was to **test** them to see if they would depend on **Him**. This command probably underscores **Jesus'** model when **He** said: **Give us each day our daily bread (Mark 6:11;**

Luke 11:3). On the sixth day they are to prepare what they bring in, and that is to be twice as much of it laying on the ground **as they gather on the other days (16:5)** in order to provide for **the seventh day, the Sabbath, a day of rest (16:23).**

No concept of **Sabbath rest** has been found in ancient **Egypt**. That fact alone highlights the differences between **God** and Pharaoh. The **God** of the TaNaKh was compassionate and caring towards **His people**; however, Pharaoh was merely an oppressive taskmaster. So today when those who love **God** recite the commandment from the Torah to remember the **Sabbath**, they also remember their deliverance from slavery out of **Egypt**.

Manna as bread from heaven points to the coming of **Jesus** as **the true bread from heaven, the bread of God**, and **the living bread that came down from heaven (John 6:32-33, 51)**, all in a spiritual sense (**John 6:63**). **Yeshua**, as both **the bread of life (John 6:35, 48)** and the source of the **water of life (Revelation 21:6, 22:1 and 17)**, can therefore say to us: **He who comes to Me will never go hungry, and he who believes in Me will never be thirsty (John 6:35)**. However, **Messiah** made a clear distinction between **manna** and **Himself** when he said: **Our forefathers ate manna and died, but he who feeds on this bread will live forever (John 6:58)**. We **will live forever** when we believe in **Him (John 6:40)**.³⁰³

Therefore, manna is a type of Christ. The Sh'khinah **glory** was connected with the giving of the **manna (John 1:14)**; it came down from heaven (**Ephesians 4:10**), it was a free gift from **God (John 3:16)**, the **manna** was sent to **Isra'el (Matthew 15:24)**, people had to gather their own **manna**, it was to be a personal experience (**John 1:12**), they were to be fed daily from it (**Psalms 69:19**); the **manna** was despised by those who were not **God's children (Numbers 11:4-6; Revelation 16:8-11)**, **manna** did not decay on **the Sabbath day (Psalms 16:8-10)**, and it is now hidden (**Revelation 2:17**).

Another typological application of **manna** is found in the TaNaKh itself. We are told that **God** gave **His people manna** to teach **them** that **man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of ADONAI (Deuteronomy 8:3)**. At the beginning of **His** ministry, **Jesus** used that verse in the desert as the Adversary tempted **Him** with hunger (**Matthew 4:1-4; Luke 4:1-4**). In doing so **He** illustrated the important fact that spiritual food is just as important as physical food.

So Moses and Aaron said to the nation of Isra'el, "In the evening you will know that it was ADONAI who brought you out of Egypt, and in the morning you will see the glory of ADONAI, because He has heard your complaining against Him. Who are we, that you should complain to us" (16:6-7)? Two physical signs were given to **Isra'el**

so that **the people** would stop **their grumbling** and see the foolishness of **their** ways. **Moses** said: **You will know that it was ADONAI when He gives you meat to eat in the evening and all the bread you want in the morning, because He has heard your grumbling against Him. Who are we? You are not grumbling against us, but against ADONAI (16:8).** This verse is essentially the same as the previous one; however, the reiteration emphasizes that **their** grumbings were ultimately directed against **God Himself**.

Then the Sh'khinah glory appeared with yet another one of its ministries, providing nourishment for **the children of Isra'el**. It called **Moses**, it led **Isra'el**, it protected **Isra'el**, it destroyed **the Egyptians**, and now it will provide the food that **Isra'el** will need for the next forty years. **Aaron** continued to act as **Moses'** spokesman by saying: **Say to the entire Israelite community, "Come before ADONAI in the cloud, for He has heard your grumbling."** While **Aaron** was speaking to the whole Israelite community, they looked toward the desert, and there was the Sh'khinah glory of **ADONAI** appearing in the cloud (16:9-10). He said to **Moses** His servant: **I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites. Tell them, "At dawn you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am ADONAI your God" (16:11-12).**

The desert experience of **the Israelites** is ours as well, but, as we see in **Hebrews 3:9-10**, with a slightly different twist. We are privileged to be living in the age in which the Kingdom of **God** has already come in **Christ**, although we still wait for **His** Second Coming. Even though we are fully capable of **complaining**, complaining and gossiping ourselves, the indwelling of **the Holy Spirit** enables us to resist those sins (**James 4:7**). But if all we learn from this section is "don't be a complainer," we will miss the riches it holds for us as we walk through **the desert**.

First, the desert is hostile territory to us and we are just passing through. It is still **God's** world. It belongs to **Him** and **He** is still very much in control of **His** creation, although in ways not always clear to us. Just as **the desert** posed no barrier for **God** to act mightily on behalf of **His** people by providing food and **water**, **the desert** in which we live is fully at **the Lord's** disposal as well. We need to take comfort in the fact that we, even here, are **ADONAI's** special people. But we should not become too comfortable where we are. We are to fully trust **Ha'Shem** while we are here (unlike **the Israelites**), while at the same time not allowing our current circumstance to define our ultimate reality. Our gaze must always be where we are going, not where we are.

Secondly, we must not judge our circumstances by how we see them, but how God wants us to see them. This is exactly what **the Israelites** were guilty of. They were guilty of self-centeredness. Throughout **Exodus** we have seen their inclination for defining their situation in terms of their own perceptions. Whether it was the lack of straw to make bricks or **the** advancing **Egyptian** army on the shore of the Red Sea, **the Israelites** did not respond in a way that we would expect from people who have seen **God's** mighty hand at work. Therefore, **ADONAI** wants us to look at the big picture. But seeing only our version of things is so natural to us! That, however, is the flesh. We need to live by **the Spirit**.³⁰⁴