

~MANNA (395)

(man'na)

.. Description

.. Purpose

.. Symbolic Use

- The main food of the Israelites during their 40-year trek in the wilderness.
- And the sons of Israel ate the **manna** forty years, until their coming to a land inhabited. The manna was what they ate until their coming to the frontier of the land of Canaan. (**Exodus 16:35**)
- **Manna** was first provided by Yehowah in the Wilderness of Sin during the last half of the second month after Israel's coming out of Egypt in **1513 B.C.E.**
- Later they departed from Elim, and the entire assembly of the sons of Israel finally came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their coming out of the land of Egypt. (**Exodus 16:1**)
- And the entire assembly of the sons of Israel began to murmur against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. (**Exodus 16:2**)
- And the sons of Israel kept saying to them; If only we had died by Yehowah's hand in the land of Egypt while we were sitting by the pots of meat, while we were eating bread to satisfaction, because you have brought us out into this wilderness to put this whole congregation to death by famine. (**Exodus 16:3**)
- Then Yehowah said to Moses; Here I am raining down bread for you from the heavens, and the people must go out and pick up each his amount day for day, in order, that I may put them to the test as to whether they will walk in my Law or not. (**Exodus 16:4**)
- It served as food for them until they entered Canaan in **1473 B.C.E.** and partook of the produce of the Promised Land.
- And the sons of Israel continued to camp in Gilgal, and they proceeded to carry out the Passover on the fourteenth day of the

month, in the evening, on the desert plains of Jericho. (**Joshua 5:10**)

- And they began to eat some of the yield of the land the day after the Passover, unfermented cakes and roasted grains, on this same day. (**Joshua 5:11**)
- Then the **manna** ceased on the following day when they had eaten some of the yield of the land, and manna did not occur anymore for the sons of Israel, and they began to eat some of the produce of the land of Canaan in that year. (**Joshua 5:12**)
- **Manna** appeared on the ground with the evaporation of a layer of dew that developed in the morning, so that upon the surface of the wilderness there was a fine flaky thing, fine like hoarfrost upon the earth. When the Israelites first saw it, they said; What is it? Or, literally, *man hu*´?
- Accordingly it occurred that in the evening the quails began to come up and cover the camp, and in the morning there had developed a layer of dew round about the camp. (**Exodus 16:13**)
- In time the layer of dew evaporated and here upon the surface of the wilderness there was a fine flaky thing, fine like hoarfrost upon the earth. (**Exodus 16:14**)
- When the sons of Israel got to see it, they began to say to one another; What is it? For they did not know what it was. Hence Moses said to them; It is the bread that Yehowah has given you for food. (**Exodus 16:15**)
- And when the dew descended upon the camp by night, the **manna** would descend upon it. (**Numbers 11:9**)
- This is the probable origin of the name, the Israelites themselves beginning to call this food **manna**.
- And the house of Israel began to call its name **manna**. And it was white like coriander seed, and its taste was like that of flat cakes with honey. (**Exodus 16:31**)

.. Description

- **Manna** was **white like coriander seed** and had the look of bdellium gum, a wax-like and transparent substance having a form that resembles a pearl. Its taste was comparable to that of flat cakes with honey or an oiled sweet cake. After being ground in a hand mill or pounded in a mortar, manna was boiled or made into cakes and baked.
- At that he said to them; It is what Yehowah has spoken. Tomorrow there will be a Sabbath observance of a holy Sabbath to Yehowah. What you can bake, bake, and what you can boil, boil, and all the surplus that there is save it up for you as something to be kept until the morning. (**Exodus 16:23**)
- And the house of Israel began to call its name, **manna**. And it was white like coriander seed, and its taste was like that of flat cakes with honey. (**Exodus 16:31**)
- Incidentally, the **manna** was like coriander seed, and its look was like the look of bdellium gum. (**Numbers 11:7**)
- The people spread out and picked it up and ground it in hand mills or pounded it in a mortar, and they boiled it in cooking pots or made it into round cakes, and its taste proved to be like the taste of an oiled sweet cake. (**Numbers 11:8**)
- No natural substance known today fits the Biblical description of **manna** in every respect, and so there is little basis for identifying it with a known product.
- This is especially so because miraculous aspects were involved in Yehowah's providing **manna** for the Israelites. The availability of **manna** did not depend on the time of year or a particular wilderness location.
- Although the **manna** would breed worms and begin to stink on all the other days if kept overnight, the additional omer of **manna** gathered on the sixth day, to be used as food on the Sabbath, did not spoil. No **manna** could be found on the Sabbath, this serving to enforce Sabbath observance on the Israelites.
- Then Moses said to them; Let nobody leave any of it until the morning. (**Exodus 16:19**)
- But they did not listen to Moses. When some men would leave some of it until the morning, it would breed worms and stink, so

that Moses became indignant at them. ([Exodus 16:20](#))

- And they would pick it up morning by morning, each one in proportion to his eating. When the sun got hot, it melted. ([Exodus 16:21](#))
- And it came about on the sixth day that they picked up twice as much bread, two omer measures for one person. So all the chieftains of the assembly came and reported it to Moses. ([Exodus 16:22](#))
- At that he said to them; It is what Yehowah has spoken. Tomorrow there will be a Sabbath observance of a holy Sabbath to Yehowah. What you can bake, bake, and what you can boil, boil, and all the surplus that there is save it up for you as something to be kept until the morning. ([Exodus 16:23](#))
- Accordingly they saved it up until the morning, just as Moses had commanded, and it did not stink nor did maggots develop in it. ([Exodus 16:24](#))
- Then Moses said; Eat it today, because today is a Sabbath to Yehowah. Today you will not find it in the field. ([Exodus 16:25](#))
- Six days you will pick it up, but on the seventh day is a Sabbath. On it none will form. ([Exodus 16:26](#))
- However, it came about on the seventh day that some of the people did go out to pick it up, but they found none. ([Exodus 16:27](#))
- Consequently Yehowah said to Moses; How long must you people refuse to keep my commandments and my Laws? ([Exodus 16:28](#))
- Mark the fact that Yehowah has given you the Sabbath. That is why he is giving you on the sixth day the bread of two days. Keep sitting each one in his own place. Let nobody go out from his locality on the seventh day. ([Exodus 16:29](#))
- And the people proceeded to observe the Sabbath on the seventh day. ([Exodus 16:30](#))

- The family head either gathered or supervised the gathering of **manna** for the entire household. Since the **manna** melted when the sun got hot, he doubtless quickly gathered the approximate supply needed for the household and afterward measured it.
- Whether little or much was gathered, depending upon the size of the household, the amount collected always proved to be one omer 2.2 Liters (2 dry quarts) per person.
- This is the word that Yehowah has commanded; Pick up some of it, each one in proportion to his eating. You are to take an omer measure for each individual according to the number of the souls that each of you has in his tent. (**Exodus 16:16**)
- And the sons of Israel began to do so, and they went picking it up, some gathering much and some gathering little. (**Exodus 16:17**)
- When they would measure it by the omer, he that had gathered much had no surplus and he that had gathered little had no shortage. They picked it up each one in proportion to his eating. (**Exodus 16:18**)
- The apostle Paul alluded to this when encouraging the Christians at Corinth to use their material surplus to offset the material deficiency of their brothers.
- For I do not mean for it to be easy for others, but hard on you. (**2 Corinthians 8:13**)
- But that by means of an equalizing your surplus just now might offset their deficiency, in order, that their surplus might also come to offset your deficiency, that an equalizing might take place. (**2 Corinthians 8:14**)
- Just as it is written: The person with much did not have too much, and the person with little did not have too little. (**2 Corinthians 8:15**)

.. Purpose

- Yehowah let the Israelites go hungry in the wilderness and then furnished **manna** to teach them, that not by bread alone does man live but by every expression of Yehowah's mouth does man live. Yehowah

did this in order to humble them and put them to the test so as to do them good in their afterdays.

- **So he humbled you and let you go hungry and fed you with the **manna**, which neither you had known nor your fathers had known, in order to make you know that not by bread alone does man live but by every expression of Yehowah's mouth does man live. (**Deuteronomy 8:3**)**
- **Who fed you with **manna** in the wilderness, which your fathers had not known, in order to humble you and in order to put you to the test so as to do you good in your afterdays. (**Deuteronomy 8:16**)**
- **When the Israelites tired of **manna** and began calling it contemptible bread, Yehowah punished their rebellion by sending poisonous serpents among them, causing the death of many.**
- **And the people kept speaking against God and Moses; Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no bread and no water, and our soul has come to abhor the contemptible bread. (**Numbers 21:5**)**
- **So Yehowah sent poisonous serpents among the people, and they kept biting the people, so that many people of Israel died. (**Numbers 21:6**)**
- **The psalmist referred to **manna** as the **grain of heaven**.**
- **And he kept raining upon them **manna** to eat, and the grain of heaven he gave to them. (**Psalms 78:24**)**
- **Bread from heaven,**
- **They asked, and he proceeded to bring quails, and with bread from heaven he kept satisfying them. (**Psalms 105:40**)**
- **And the very bread of powerful ones.**
- **Men ate the **very bread of powerful** ones, provisions he sent them to satisfaction. (**Psalms 78:25**)**
- **Angels are described as being mighty in power.**

- Bless Yehowah, O you angels of his, mighty in power, carrying out his word, by listening to the voice of his word. (**Psalms 103:20**)
- And therefore could be called powerful ones. This, however, would not mean that angels actually eat **manna**, but that God may have used angelic means in providing it for the Israelites.
- Why, then, the Law? It was added to make transgressions manifest, until the seed should arrive to whom the promise had been made, and it was transmitted through angels by the hand of a mediator. (**Galatians 3:19**)
- Or, since heaven is the dwelling place of the powerful ones, the expression, bread of powerful ones, may simply point to its heavenly source.
- So that future generations might see **manna**, Aaron was to deposit before Yehowah a jar containing an omer 2.2 liters (2 dry quarts) of **manna**. After the golden ark of the covenant was completed, a golden jar of **manna** was put inside this sacred chest.
- Then Moses said; This is the word that Yehowah has commanded, Fill an omer measure of it as something to be kept throughout your generations, in order, that they may see the bread that I made you eat in the wilderness when I was bringing you out of the land of Egypt. (**Exodus 16:32**)
- So Moses said to Aaron; Take a jar and put in it an omerful of **manna** and deposit it before Yehowah as something to be kept throughout your generations. (**Exodus 16:33**)
- Just as Yehowah had commanded Moses, Aaron proceeded to deposit it before the Testimony as something to be kept. (**Exodus 16:34**)
- This had a golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid all around with gold, in which were the golden jar having the **manna** and the rod of Aaron that budded and the tablets of the covenant. (**Hebrews 9:4**)
- About five centuries later, however, when the Ark was transferred from the tent that David had erected for it to the temple that Solomon had built, the golden jar was missing.

- So they brought the ark of Yehowah in and set it in its place inside the tent that David had pitched for it, after which David offered up burnt sacrifices and communion sacrifices before Yehowah. (2 Samuel 6:17)
- There was nothing in the Ark but the two stone tablets which Moses had deposited there in Horeb, when Yehowah had covenanted with the sons of Israel while they were coming out from the land of Egypt. (1 Kings 8:9)
- There was nothing in the Ark but the two tablets that Moses had given at Horeb, when Yehowah covenanted with the sons of Israel while they were coming out from Egypt. (2 Chronicles 5:10)
- It had served its purpose.

· Symbolic Use

- Although the **manna** was a divine provision.
- And your good spirit you gave to make them prudent, and your **manna** you did not hold back from their mouth, and water you gave them for their thirst. (Nehemiah 9:20)
- It did not sustain the lives of the Israelites forever. Christ Jesus made a point of this, and then he added,
- Therefore they said to him; What, then, are you performing as a sign, in order for us to see it and believe you? What work are you doing? (John 6:30)
- Our forefathers ate the **manna** in the wilderness, just as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. (John 6:31)
- Hence Jesus said to them; Most truly I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but my Father does give you the true bread from heaven. (John 6:32)
- For the bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. (John 6:33)
- I am the bread of life. (John 6:48)

- Your forefathers ate the **manna** in the wilderness and yet died. (**John 6:49**)
- This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that anyone may eat of it and not die. (**John 6:50**)
- I am the living bread that came down from heaven, if anyone eats of this bread he will live forever, and, for a fact, the bread that I shall give is my flesh in behalf of the life of the world. (**John 6:51**)
- This is the bread that came down from heaven. It is not as when your forefathers ate and yet died. He that feeds on this bread will live forever. (**John 6:58**)
- Christ's faithful followers avail themselves of this heavenly **manna**, or **bread of life**. They do so in a figurative manner by exercising faith in the redeeming power of Jesus flesh and blood laid down in sacrifice. Their doing so opens up to them the prospect of living forever, whether in the heavens with Christ or in the earthly Paradise.
- Christ also used the jar of **manna** symbolically when he assured his spirit-anointed followers that those who prove to be conquerors would receive, **the hidden manna**, an imperishable food supply or that which results from such a supply, in their case, immortality and incorruptibility in heaven.
- Let the one who has an ear hear what the spirit says to the congregations; To him that conquers I will give some of the hidden **manna**, and I will give him a white pebble, and upon the pebble a new name written which no one knows except the one receiving it. (**Revelation 2:17**)
- For this which is corruptible must put on incorruption, and this which is mortal must put on immortality. (**1 Corinthians 15:53**)