

# The Bread of Heaven

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# Chapter 1

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## *What is It?*

*He brought them forth also with silver and gold: and there was not one feeble person among their tribes. Egypt was glad when they departed: for the fear of them fell upon them. He spread a cloud for a covering; and fire to give light in the night. The people asked, and he brought quails, and satisfied them with the **bread of heaven** (Ps 105:37-40).*

*And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, **What is it?** For they knew not what it was. And Moses said unto them, *It is the bread which Jehovah hath given you to eat* (Exo 16:14-15).*

**T**hey had been on the road for about a month and a half. The food supply they brought with them out of Egypt was running out, and the people had started complaining. The euphoria associated with the miraculous deliverance from Pharaoh and the wonder of wonders that they experienced in the Red Sea had worn off, and they were beginning to have second thoughts.

They had soon forgotten that just a few weeks before, when they landed on this side of the Red Sea, they were jubilantly celebrating their great deliverance from Pharaoh and singing the song of Moses.

*I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The LORD is my strength*

*and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him a habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him.*

*Who is like unto thee, O LORD, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?*

*Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation (Ex 15: 1,2,11,13).*

These are a few verses of the celebrative and prophetic song of Moses which they sang. Not only did they sing this song, but Miriam the prophetess and all the women celebrated with timbrels and with dances. However, this euphoria was short-lived.

The people of God were moving on now. They had a wonderful praise-worship, and were beginning their new life as the redeemed of the Lord. They, and probably you and me, supposed that from then on, these redeemed people would have a smooth life. They probably also expected that it would be a bed of roses and their roads would be smoothly paved, with not a single thorn along their way. But they soon met a rude awakening when they traveled from the place of celebration for three days in the wilderness looking for water and found none.

Then they remembered that they had come out of Egypt. The land they came out of was a land with an abundant water supply, streams and rivers and cisterns full of water. But now they were in this wilderness without even a drop of water to drink. They began to long for the cisterns of Egypt and desire to return, for they had yet to know the Fountain of Living Waters. They, like us, failed this first test, but an even greater test was ahead of them, as recorded in the sixteenth chapter of Exodus.

*And they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came unto the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt.*

*And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness: And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger (Exo 16:1 -3).*

They had been traveling for about six weeks and their supply of food was running out, and after their bitter experience of thirst for three days, they'd about had it with Moses and Aaron. They were ready to return to the land of their captivity. The people began to complain: *We wish the Lord had killed us in Egypt, where we had plenty to eat. You brought us out to the wilderness to die of hunger.* The Israelites tended to concentrate on their current troubles rather than look at God's faithfulness for encouragement. Instead of remembering the great things God had done for them—freeing them from slavery, opening the Red Sea for them—they complained bitterly about their hunger. Did they think that the God who parted the Red Sea before them could not provide for them in the wilderness? Before you look down on them, turn the mirror toward yourself, for we are just like them.

What about you and me? When we find ourselves in trouble or serious need, what do we do? When the subsequent need or problem seems to be more serious than the previous ones, what kind of reaction and demeanor do we exhibit? Do we usually remember at such times to sing, "*He's got the whole world in His hands*"? Ponder these things.

As always, discontent tends to magnify what is past and vilify what is present without regard to truth or reason. The impatience and ingratitude of murmurers and complainers know no bounds. You see, they were so consumed by these fears that they forgot all the miraculous favors they received from God. They were blind to those convincing proofs that God could and would help them in the time of need. *They forgot his works, and provoked him at the sea, even at the Red Sea (Psa 106:7-13).*

After they had murmured and complained long and hard about the scarcity of food, Jehovah promised to *rain bread from heaven* upon them and even promised to send them quail for meat in the evening.

*Then said the LORD unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no (Exo 16:4).*

God responded to Israel's grumbling and accusations that they were only brought out of Egypt to die in the desert. Of course, God wasn't going to let them die; it was only a test of their trust. After all, He made a promise to their fathers that He would surely keep. Even the food He rained down from heaven upon them was to prove them, as in the passage above.

*And it came to pass at even, that the quails came up, and covered the camp: and in the morning the dew lay round about the camp.*

*And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness a small round thing, small as the hoar-frost on the ground.*

*And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, **What is it?** For they knew not what it was. And Moses said unto them, *It is the bread which Jehovah hath given you to eat (Exo 16:13 -15).**

They looked and saw the field covered with a white substance after the dew lifted at the break of the day. They asked each other, "What is that?" Some of them picked handfuls, while others asked, "What is it?" Since they could not describe the nature of the white substance, that inexplicable *whatness* became its name. Indeed, the word *manna* means "What is it?"

Then, Moses told them it was the food that Jehovah had prepared for them: the corn of heaven, the food of the angels, cooked in heaven and sent down with the dew for them to gather and eat. This was the bread of the mighty, prepared by God to meet their every need. "Get up," Moses said to them; "Go, all of you and gather as much as you need for the day."

"What is that?" "What is it?" This is the same question we are asking today. We, the people of God, are full of questions. It's good to ask questions, but when God speaks, the best reaction from us should be to trust and obey, even if we do not understand what He's doing. You cannot define the bread of life; you cannot even give it a name. So stop trying to figure it out. It is not given to us to examine or describe in the laboratory. We are to take it, eat it, digest it, and it will perform in us what the great Designer has programmed into it.

So *manna* was the name the Israelites gave to the food miraculously supplied to them during their wilderness journey. He also gave them quails, but this bread that He rained down was like nothing they'd ever seen. The name they gave this bread is commonly understood as an expression of surprise: "What is it?", but is also said to have been derived from "manna," meaning "to allot," and hence denoting an "allotment" or a portion from God. It is described as "a small round thing," like the "hoar-frost on the ground," and "like coriander seed," with "the color of bdellium" and a sweet taste "like wafers made with honey." They baked cakes with it, boiled it, ground it in mills as flour, and pounded it in mortars. It was a very versatile foodstuff.

Manna was an altogether miraculous food, specially prepared for the people of God. It was constituted by Jehovah to contain all that His children would need for forty years. Everything they needed for their health, provision, and sustenance, including nutrition, vitamins, and immunization, was in the manna. God gave them angel's food, as the Psalmist described it in Chapter 78 of his book.

However, manna is meant to symbolize utter dependence upon God. It was prepared in heaven without any help or suggestion from man. Man had no say in its preparation or content. It was prepared at night while man was fast asleep. This wonderful Bread of God would settle on the dew in the darkness of the night, unaided, untouched, uncontaminated by the hand of man.

Beloved, we must know that there is nothing we can do to produce the life-giving bread of heaven. But in the night, while we are fast asleep, resting helplessly in His arms, God prepares our provision for

the coming day. He caused them to sleep, and while they were asleep, He prepared the Bread of Life for them. God knows it, and we know it too: it is necessary for us to be asleep while He prepares the manna for us, otherwise we would put our hands on it and contaminate it. Blessed be God, for the manna was prepared in God's heavens, and sent down while man was sleeping.

Manna, though no one among them could describe what it was, was so much like the One it represented. It was small (that is, humble), but pure, white, and clean. They spoke of it as being like a seed or like the hoarfrost. This definitely reminds us of the "seed," the grain of wheat that fell into the earth and died, and afterward germinated and brought forth a multitude of fruits.

Dear Saint, The Lord our God has prepared the Bread of Life for us in heaven. He has even sent Him down to us. But for it to benefit us, we must humble ourselves, stoop down, gather it, and eat. We must digest and assimilate this into our systems, and when we do, there will be no feeble person among our tribes. Understand this: there is a gathering of the manna that we must do, for this is a test of our obedience to the El-Shaddai One who has prepared and rained down the manna from heaven upon us.

When God began to rain down the manna from heaven, He instructed the people, through Moses, to gather only as much as they needed for that day. If they gathered more, so that they would have enough for the next day, the excess became unfit to eat. God faithfully provided the people with manna, one day at a time, for forty years, to teach them the lesson that God is a faithful, dependable Provider who can be trusted. This is the basic lesson of faith that God is still trying to teach us, His children, in this wilderness journey. The same loving Jehovah God who watched over and provided for the Israelites of old is watching over us in our spiritual journeys today.

Therefore, let's not question Him as to what He is doing. Let's trust and obey Him, for He knows what He will do beforehand. Even when He seems to allow us to get into a fix, He knows what He's going to do to get us out. Let's not doubt His power, nor speak against Him, as

they did. Let's learn not to murmur or complain, for this is not pleasing to Him.

*And they sinned yet more against him by provoking the Most High in the wilderness. And they tempted God in their heart by asking food for their desire. Yes, they spoke against God; they said, Can God furnish a table in the wilderness?*

*Behold, he smote the rock, that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed; can he give bread also? Can he provide flesh for his people? Therefore the LORD heard this, and was wroth: so a fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel; Because they believed not in God, and trusted not in his salvation (Psa 78:17 -22).*

The lessons of the miraculous provision of manna are largely related to faith and trust in Jehovah Jireh, for He is the God that prepares and supplies our daily needs. We must live one day at a time in complete trust and dependence on Him. We must trust the El-Shaddai daily for a fresh supply of the manna from heaven.



# Chapter 2

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## *New Every Morning*

*It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are **new every morning**: great is Thy faithfulness (Lam 3:22).*

**T**he title of this chapter is special to me. It brings me a sweet sense of nostalgia and a vivid memory of those sweet Holy Ghost meetings of the Seventies when we sang the song containing the words of the passage above and the refreshing breeze of the Spirit seemed to fill and flow across the room. What a time of refreshing that was! The song goes this way:

*The steadfast Love of the Lord never ceaseth  
His mercy never comes to an end  
They are new every morning, New every morning  
Great is Thy faithfulness O Lord, Great is Thy faithfulness*

I don't know who composed the song, but the person must have been meditating on the words of Jeremiah when he was reminiscing on God's faithfulness in the third chapter of Lamentation quoted above.

My prayer for you and me is that we would always remember and believe the message of this song in times of trouble. That we'll remember to sing of His faithfulness, even when passing through the valley in a waterless wilderness; that we will not be found in the

company of the murmurers and complainers, but with those who sing of His faithfulness.

Each of us can surely identify with these encouraging words from the mouth of Jeremiah the prophet: *“That it is because of the mercies of the Lord that we are not consumed.”* We are not worthy of all the blessings that we receive from Him, but the Lord is gracious and full of compassion. The book of Hebrews admonishes us to enter the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Apostle Paul knows very much how much we need the mercies of God. That’s why he opened many of his epistles with these words: *Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord be with you.* The Apostle of love opened his second epistle in a similar way, saying, *“Grace be with you, mercy, and peace from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love (2 John 1:3).*

The most comforting part of this message is that His mercy can always be counted on. His love and mercies are new every morning. Even when we are unfaithful, He remains faithful; His faithfulness is forevermore.

We see a great demonstration of this in our daily life, as we see the underserved favors that we receive from Him. This is why the children of Israel were not consumed in the wilderness, in spite of their rebellion, ingratitude, and lack of trust in God. You would think that the miraculous deliverances they received would be convincing enough as proofs that God could and would always help them, but they still distrusted Him and *provoked Him to anger.* Though they were a murmuring, rebellious, and ungrateful people, the Lord dealt kindly and bountifully with them. He did not rain fire and brimstone upon them, even though they deserved this, but did what was kind to them. God would have been just if He had said, *“I will rain fire and brimstone upon these murmurers, and consume them because of their ingratitude and provocation,”* but on the contrary, he rained bread out of heaven upon them. His love and mercies are inexplicable.

*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 who are in his tents. And the children of Israel did so, and gathered, some more, some less.*

*And when they measured 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 (Exo 16:16-18).*

God gave the children of Israel explicit instructions to gather the manna for their households at a quantity of *an omer per person*. While God provided the substance, they still had to gather and prepare it for eating. God could have simply supernaturally sustained them without their having to gather and prepare food, but He did not. They had a part in this work. Theirs was to trust and obey Him. God provided, but they had to reach out in faith to receive. Whether they gathered more than their share to hoard, or whether they gathered too little, no one lacked. Each had his or her *daily* allotment met. God had given each of them a portion.

Dear child of God, let this be an encouragement for you: that as the true meaning of manna signifies, God has allotted a portion for you which no man can hoard or take from you. Even when it seems that others have plenty and you have very little, the El-Shaddai is your portion. He that gathered little shall have no lack, because the One who is more than enough is his everlasting portion.

There is also a New Testament principle here in the manna, as the Apostle wrote in his Epistle to the Corinthians:

*But by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want: that there may be an equality: as it is written, He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack (2 Cor. 8:14-15).*

Our Almighty God is at work in His people to bring us to that kind of *equality* that He desires in the New Covenant people. The Holy

Ghost, through the Apostle, is setting forth this manna principle. The Father God will continue to discipline His children until we have learned to wisely use what God has provided for our daily needs and to make the rest available to those who stand in need, *that there may be an equality*. He will continue to work in us until we truly know that it is more blessed to give than to receive, and that true ministry is not in the wealth we acquire through our faith, but in what we are able to give and sacrifice for others.

The children of Israel did as they were told, some gathered much and some little. But when they measured it, those who had gathered much had no excess, and those who had gathered little had no lack. The heavenly bread is indeed miraculous. God is also showing us here that if we just do the best we can, He will do the rest. If we just obey Him and do our parts, He will make it measure up. We cannot do it right or measure things perfectly right using our own strength or ability, but if we just obey His commands, He will perfect it. In reality, we cannot do it right without Him.

*And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning.*

*Nothwithstanding 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 [Exod. 16:19–21].*

They were commanded to leave none of it for the next day. They were to eat all of what they had prepared or gathered that same day and not make provision for the future. God's part was to supply them a fresh allotment every morning. He did not want them to live on stale food, but on fresh provision every morning; it was bread they had to gather daily and bread they had to eat daily. It had to be gathered in the morning, because the heat of the sun would cause it to melt away. It wasn't something they could store up. Each man was to gather it. It was to be a personal experience

Beloved, if God's Word is to be to us a living Word, it must come to us fresh every morning. It is not enough that I can prove it's in the Bible; I am not going to derive any life from it unless it is the Living Word that He is saying to me today. It must be a Word that "*proceedeth*" out from the mouth of the Lord.

We must hear His voice daily. We cannot live on the revelation of yesterday, but must receive fresh anointing from the Head daily. We must ask and receive fresh oil from our High Priest on a daily basis. Is it any wonder, then, that when Jesus taught His disciples how to pray, He began with, "*Our Father who is in heaven, hallowed be thy Name. Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread...*"? This is perhaps the most famous prayer in the entire world. Hallowing our Father and seeking His will and Kingdom, the Lord Jesus taught us to pray for *our daily bread*. This daily dose of bread out of heaven is what will make us overcomers each day in this wilderness. It will keep our bodies and souls healthy on this arduous wilderness journey. We must gather and eat the manna afresh every single day of our lives.

God had commanded them not to save any of the manna for the next day. While they slept, Jehovah prepared their meal, loaded with all the vitamins and necessary ingredients to make them strong. The Israelites were to gather each day the amount of food they needed for that day; no more, no less.

His promise to them was that He would provide a fresh portion for them every morning. He wanted them to rely on Him and sleep, knowing that when they woke in the morning, their Jehovah-Jireh would have prepared a table for them in the wilderness. So they were never to worry about tomorrow, but gather food just for the day, because He holds tomorrow. However, some of the children of Israel saved some of the food till the next day, and surely as the Lord God lives, the leftovers bred worms, became rotten, and stank. This is what happens when we do not put our complete trust in Him and try to help God help us. You hear people say, "Heaven helps those who help themselves." That's what those "smart" Israelites who saved some of the manna for the next day were doing. They

probably did this “just in case” God didn’t come through for them. A lack of trust in God is displeasing to Him.

They never really learned God’s way. However, we shouldn’t criticize them at all. After all, we in this day and age have not come any further than they did, when it comes to truly trusting God for our *Daily Bread*. Don’t we also grumble and complain? Don’t we still worry about tomorrow? Yes, some of the Israelites gathered more than a day’s worth of manna, which speaks of worrying about what will happen the next day. It speaks of a lack of trust that He will be there to meet your needs tomorrow. It speaks of hoarding and greed. The Lord Jesus, speaking to us about this in the gospels, said:

*Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature? So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.*

*Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore, do not worry, saying ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.*

*But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.*

*Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about its own things. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.” (Matt. 6:24-34)*

*And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating: and when the sun became hot, it melted (Exo 16:16-21).*

Natural man, being made out of the earth, gets his food out of the earth. He walks by the senses, and he has to know and see where his provision is coming from. He needs to know where his food for

tomorrow will come from, for he cannot walk by faith; he walks by sight. But the people of God, the church of the firstborn written in heaven and born from above, whose laws were given by the disposition of angels, receive their food from heaven; for they eat angels' food.

The bread out of heaven given to the people of God is designed to prove them, to see if they will learn to walk by faith and not by sight. God caused them to hunger and then gave them manna to *prove them, whether they will walk in His law or not*. Thus, it was a test to see whether they would trust him and walk in the law of faith or not; whether they could live from hand to mouth, day by day, and could rest satisfied with the bread of the day and depend upon God for fresh supplies for the next.

And so, for each day, God would give them that day's supply. They were to trust him daily for their fresh provision. On the sixth day, they were to gather twice as much; the extra was to be used on the seventh day, when there was to be no work. *This extra food did not rot. Some of them, hard of hearing, still went out on the Sabbath day to look for manna, but found none. It seems that man never stops testing God's patience with his rebellion.*

God had told His people again and again to *remember the sabbath day to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work;.. For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath-day, and hallowed it* (Exo 20:8-11).

And here He told them not to go out looking for manna to gather on the Sabbath, for that is the day of His rest. There was no one preparing manna for the people on earth on the Sabbath day, and so on the sixth day, they were to gather a double portion. *"There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God"* (Heb. 4:9). God was "resting" on that day; and because God's people were partaking of His rest, the manna of the sixth day would be sufficient. Our manna is a spiritual food; and our Sabbath is a spiritual Sabbath. Man's

working day is drawing to a close, and God's Sabbath of Rest is at hand. The people of God in this wilderness must therefore partake of the *double portion, so as to have enough to supply the needs of their households in the day of His rest.* We must partake of it so that that we might have ample supply for the people of God, so they don't go looking for manna on the day of God's rest.



# Chapter 3

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## *Suffered Thee to Hunger*

*And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.*

*And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live (Deut 8:2 -3).*

**W**ait a minute! Let's pause and ask a question right here. *Who led the Children of Israel through the wilderness for forty years?* Someone once said, "I thought they wandered through the wilderness, gaining a day's distance each year." Well, the passage of Scripture quoted from the book of Deuteronomy above gives us the answer.

We must be cognizant of this important fact: although some may consider that the Hebrew children wandered in the wilderness for 40 years, the truth of the matter is that the Lord was leading them. He led them by day and by night. His Glory was with them, and the Ark of His Presence was in the midst of the camp. He was leading them, but

because they did not know His ways, to them and to some of us, the whole episode was purposeless wandering.

God brought them out, safely landed them on the bank of the Red Sea in the wilderness, and shut the door behind them. He had them where He wanted them; then He shut the door behind them. There was no going back. Now they were out there in the wilderness, where He could prove them and prepare them for the Land of Promise.

Have you ever felt that way before? Have you ever felt like God led you out of a place, maybe a comfort zone, led you to where He wanted you, and then shut the door behind you so there was no going back? Now He has you where He wants you, and He's going to prepare you for the land of your inheritance. However, the preparation may not be pleasant, as we shall see in the experience of those beloved Hebrew children who came out of Egypt.

At the time of this message of Moses in Deuteronomy, the children of Israel had been out of Egypt for about thirty-eight years. The generation that originally came out of Egypt had passed on, and it was a new generation that Moses the man of God was addressing. This new generation, who were not yet born or below twenty years of age when they came out of Egypt, needed to have the Law re-echoed in their ears. So the book of Deuteronomy is a recapitulation, a reenactment of the law. God, through Moses, was re-emphasizing the law to instruct this new generation of people who were about to enter into the land of promise. Moses was preparing them to enter the land.

He started his admonition by saying, "*And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God hath led thee these forty years in the wilderness.*" Yes, you got it! Jehovah God led them all those forty years in the wilderness. He was right there with them, in the midst of the Camp of Israel. When they got up for the "journeying of the camp," God went in front of them as the Pillar of Fire by night and the Cloud of Glory by day.

Moses charged this new generation to be obedient to the commandments of God, knowing that he had to leave them shortly.

They must have received the ordinances of God from their parents, for God had told His people to continually teach, rehearse, and demonstrate the Law to their children. They were to celebrate the feast of the Lord, and in doing so, explain to their children all the wondrous works that Jehovah God did in bringing them out of the land of bondage.

This, by the way, is what the Lord expects from every Christian parent today. We are to teach our children the word of God, show them how to pray, exemplify the heart of worship, and lead them into the Presence of God. We are to talk to our children about the Lord continually, and give them His testimonies while we walk along the road and while we are at home. We are to teach them the statutes of the Lord our God. This is not the job of the schools, nor is it the responsibility of the church ministers.

In this admonition, Moses clearly presented the purpose of the wilderness journey to them and to us, the peoples of God. Many have wondered why, after the awesome experience of salvation with all its associated blessedness, they now find themselves in a miserable wilderness. It is indeed a shock; they were expecting this new life in Christ Jesus to be a bed of roses, the road paved with gold and the skies above decorated with glitter. But when the euphoria of salvation has worn off, they suddenly wake up under the desert sun, surrounded by cactus and thirsty for water. That was exactly how the Hebrew children felt a month after leaving Egypt.

He told them that God wanted them to consider how He had been leading them and to perceive the purpose of His dealings with them. He told them that the purpose of the wilderness journey was ***to humble them, to prove them, and to know what was in their hearts.***

The tests and the trials in this wilderness are intended to reveal what is really in us. This explains why God puts you and me through the mill. The trial of our faith, which the Bible says is more precious than gold, is to prove us. Sometimes it seems like we are being passed through the furnace, and other times it feels like we are going

through the grinding of the mill, but the purpose of it all is to test us and expose what we are made of. Man is proud, cocky, and full of himself; therefore, God must take His people and put them through the mill in order to humble them and to prove them.

As you know, testing proves a metal. Testing exposes the impurities in a metal and provides the opportunity for removing the impurities. This is especially true for precious metals like gold. Trials and tests will reveal what sort of a person the child of God really is.

This message is as true for us today as it was for them in the days of Moses. God wants us to remember all His goodness towards us. He wants us to remember all the training, the tests, and the trials that He has put us through or allowed us to come through. He wants us to know that the purpose of it all is to prove us, to expose what is in our hearts so those impurities can be dealt with. And He wants us to be assured and *“confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ”* (Phil. 1:6).

*“And He humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger...”* This was the next statement in Moses’ message.

Any time you feel satisfied and contented, you should check yourself; you may be in a place of complacency and need a revival. We must continue to seek after God and pray to hunger after Him until we are completely transformed into the likeness of Christ; until this mortality is swallowed up of life.

There is a spiritual hunger in the heart of every man. This hunger causes him to keep looking everywhere, seeking for some means of satisfying the hunger. He pursues money and worldly material things, yet the void remains. He seeks after pleasure and wallows in it, yet discovers that he is even more empty than at first. He then tries the occult or metaphysics, and still discovers that the core ingredient he needs to satisfy the hunger of his heart is utterly absent and the void seems to deepen. Man, being a spirit made in the image of God to fellowship with Him as a companion, will never find satisfaction until he returns home to his Maker. The heart-hunger in man will never be

satisfied until he returns to his God and Maker, for that hunger was designed to be satisfied by communion with the God who made him.

There is also a spiritual hunger in every Child of God: a hunger and a thirst after God. This is the desire to be in the Presence of the Father and to abide there. It is a two-way desire, for the Father Himself desires His own to come and fellowship with Him; for the Father Himself loves them. The Father cherishes the time His own spend in communion with Him, and is constantly bidding them to come. His ultimate desire is for them to abide permanently in His Presence. This spiritual hunger and thirst is necessary in every Child of God to cause us to seek after God.

It is common knowledge that a hungry man will not stop seeking until he has found food, and a thirsty man will keep seeking until he's filled with refreshing water. The amount of water a thirsty man will drink depends on the degree of his thirst; one who is not thirsty will probably not seek for water.

Can you see what the Holy Spirit is saying in this Scripture above? When we hunger and thirst for more of Him, we seek Him, we pursue Him as the deer pants after the water brook. But if we see ourselves becoming self-satisfied and complacent, contented with our spiritual condition or religious attainment, we should become wary, because that is a dangerous state.

I know the Lord said, "*Blessed are they who hunger and thirst after righteousness, for \*they\* shall be filled.*" Yes, the hunger and the thirst draw us to Him, the Water of Life, and we feed on the bread and are filled; we drink of the fountain until our bellies issue forth *rivers of living waters*. However, where we are today spiritually, we do not remain permanently in His Presence. We need to continually return to our Supply and Source of life; therefore, in this wilderness, we need this incessant hunger and thirst to continually pull us back to Him until we permanently dwell in His Presence and our mortality is swallowed up of Life.

*Lord, I sincerely pray that You'll keep me hungry, give me an incessant hunger for the Bread of Heaven. Keep me thirsty, Dear Lord, thirsty for*

*the Living Water. And draw me to that Rock that followed them, even to the Fountain of Life.*

*Keep me thirsting, Dear Holy Spirit, and fill me with the Water of Life. Keep my soul longing for You and my heart panting after You as the deer pants after the water brook*

*Keep me hungry, Dear Jehovah, and satisfy my longing soul, keep my heart panting after You and feed me with the Bread of Heaven. Amen.*

*For He satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness (Psa 107:9).*

So Moses began to remind them of how God had been good to them all those years. He also reminded them of their rebellion against Him and how they kicked against Him and His ways in the wilderness. Let's meditate specifically on the incidence in the wilderness of Shur. Soon after they had celebrated their deliverance from Egypt, when they sang, danced, and prophesied, they were faced with three days without water.

*"..and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water. And when they came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah, for they were bitter: therefore the name of it was called Marah."*

After three days without water, they finally got to a place where they saw water, but alas! they discovered the water was bitter and they could not drink.

Who was leading the children of Israel? Was it Moses? No, it was not Moses; for both Moses and the children of Israel followed the *cloud of glory* by day and the *pillar of fire* by night. Jehovah, the Lord God Almighty, was their guide through the wilderness. Here are a couple of Scriptures to establish this statement:

*And I have **led you** forty years in the wilderness: your clothes are not waxen old upon **you**, and thy shoe is not waxen old upon thy foot. Deu 29:5*

*And thou didst divide the sea before them, so that they went through the midst of the sea on the dry land; and their persecutors thou threwest into the deeps, as a stone into the mighty waters.*

*Moreover thou leddest them in the day by a cloudy pillar; and in the night by a pillar of fire, to give them light in the way wherein they should go. Neh 9:10 -11*

Can you therefore tell me why God would lead them out of Egypt across the Red Sea, and cause them to be without water for three days? And when they were thirsting for water, He led them to a place where there was water, but it was bitter and they couldn't drink? Why? There must be a purpose for this and something for us to learn. *For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.*

What was the purpose of God leading them to the waters of Marah? He did not lead them to Marah to destroy or to punish them. He did not bring them to Marah because He was mad at them, but to reveal the condition of their hearts, and that they might see His grace in turning the waters of Marah sweet. Let's hear what He told them in Deut 8:2-3:

*And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or not.*

*And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live.*

Here is God's answer to the questions above. He explained the purpose of the wilderness life. The passage stated that He passed them through times of thirst and hunger to prove them, to reveal what was in their hearts.

When God leads you and me to the waters of Marah, know that there is a purpose for it. You may ask, “What is the purpose in God giving me bitter water to drink?” The purpose is not for you to stoop down and drink the bitter waters; His purpose is that the bitter water would make you see His grace and favor in turning the bitter into sweet. But, unaware of God’s ways, we stoop down and drink the bitter waters and complain bitterly against God and man. And like Naomi, we change our names and drink more bitter water, and of course become more and more bitter.

The purpose of God for Marah is revealed in the twenty-fifth verse of Exodus 15: *And he (Moses) cried unto the LORD; and the LORD showed him a tree, which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet: there he made for them a statute and an ordinance, and there he proved them.*

God led them to Marah, not to cause them to drink bitter water, but to prove them and to show the miracle of turning the bitter water to sweet. The wilderness is intended for testing, for proving, not for destruction; it is not intended to frustrate us and bring murmuring and complaining. It is not intended to make us become so bitter, like Naomi, that we change our names to Marah.

In the tremendously meaningful and prophetic life story presented in the book of Ruth, we see a family that went through a tough time. This was the family of Elimelech of the tribe of Judah, who at the start was living together with his family in Bethlehem of Judah. Bethlehem means “the house of bread”; no wonder that this was where the *Bread of Life* was born.

It came to pass that there was famine in the land. There was famine in *the house of bread*. Elimelech, therefore, took his wife and two sons, and went to sojourn in the land of Moab. But things did not get better; in fact, things got worse. In the course of time, Elimelech died, as did his two sons Mahlon and Chilion, who had married two women of Moab. The three widows were left mourning the loss of their husbands. You cannot imagine the kind of sorrow and grief that Naomi was going through.



So Naomi decided to return from Moab to her country and to her city, Bethlehem, for she *heard in the country of Moab how that Jehovah had visited his people in giving them bread* (Ruth 1:6). She heard that Jehovah-Jireh had sent bread to Bethlehem, the *house of bread*. Therefore she returned with Ruth, her daughter-in-law. When they got back home to Bethlehem, the whole city was moved by the news that Naomi was back. And the people began to say, "*Is this Naomi?*"

We must understand the meaning of her name before we can understand her reply and the revelation of the Spirit in this passage. The name Naomi means "pleasant, delightful, and lovable." So when Naomi returned, the entire city was excited because the "pleasant one" was back home. However, when the people of Bethlehem were all talking about Naomi, *the pleasant, delightful, and lovable one*, Naomi herself had become very bitter. Hear what Naomi said to her relatives in Bethlehem:

*Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the LORD hath brought me home again empty: why then call ye me Naomi, seeing the LORD hath testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?* (Ruth 1:21)

When her people said, "*Naomi is back!*", she said "No, not Naomi anymore, but Mara, for the Lord has dealt bitterly with me, God has gone against me." "Mara" means bitter. Dr Strong, in his Hebrew dictionary of Biblical words, rendered the meaning of the word *mara* (maw-raw, H4755) as "bitter," an equivalent of the word *Marah*, found in Exodus 16 and discussed above. *Marah* is a feminine form of the root word meaning "bitter."

But as we understand from the Scriptures, there was a divine purpose for the bitter situation that Naomi was passing through, for we see the beautiful end of the story of Naomi and Ruth. We see how this situation led to Ruth and Boaz the Kinsman Redeemer becoming part of the lineage of Christ the Redeemer. God turned *the bitter back to sweetness*; He turned *Mara* back to *Naomi*.

Like Naomi, you may have been going through a lot of sorrow, anguish and misfortune, and you may have become bitter, probably almost bitter against God. In my experience ministering to believers one-on-one, I've met some who have become like Naomi because of loss, hardship, and the difficulties of life. I have seen saints who love God and are following Him that have been going through really hard times, yet they know that God has been leading them.

God wants you to know that there is hope for you; for you have been born again into a "*living hope*" by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from death. In spite of the circumstances of life that you are going through, there is a glorious hope for you because Christ, *The Hope of Glory*, is in you.

God said the purpose of the wilderness life and the manna was to humble them and to prove them; for God was preparing for Himself a special people, and God cannot walk with the proud and the scornful. He was testing them to reveal the inherent corruption of their nature, and at the same time, to show them His way for them and His own faithfulness.

The wilderness life is not meant to destroy us, the people of God, but to prepare us for the land of our inheritance. The grand reason for the Israelites being led into the wilderness was that they might receive training directly under the eye of God; and the first lesson He taught them was that of constant dependence on Him for their daily nourishment. This is the same with us. The bitter situations that we meet in this wilderness are not meant to make us bitter, but to prove us and to train us to become dependent on God.

Dear saint, the Spirit of God is without doubt speaking to you right now. Whatever bitter experience has come your way, go unto the Lord and cry unto Him. Ask Him what He might be trying to show you, and like He did for Moses, He will show you the "tree" that you can cast into the bitter water and it will become sweet. This will change your life, your character, and your nature from bitter into sweet. The Lord wants to rid us of every bitterness, every carnality, and prepare us for that land of union with Christ, the land of Canaan.

God is at work in our lives. He is leading and directing the affairs of the lives of His chosen ones on the earth. He is exposing what we are made of and what is in our hearts so that He might change us to become like Him. Therefore, be encouraged; whatever bitter and hard situation you are going through, your name is still Naomi and not Mara. Remind yourself of His Love and His promise that He will never leave you. Remember, it is His *glory cloud* that led you to where you are, and His purpose is to show his grace and power on your behalf. Don't stoop down to drink the bitter water of Marah, for that will only cause you to grumble, complain, and grow in bitterness. Sometimes you might feel like changing your name and moving out of town to where nobody knows your name. Don't do it. Don't change the name He has given you. You are the *pleasant one*. Proceed to the next stage of receiving His miracles, of changing your situation from bitterness into sweetness. Speak His word and He will turn your wilderness into a flourishing garden of the Lord. Speak the words of faith and tell everyone to call you *Naomi, the sweet and pleasant one*.

# Chapter 4

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## No Feeble Person

*He brought them forth also with silver and gold: and there was **not one feeble person among their tribes**. Egypt was glad when they departed: for the fear of them fell upon them. He spread a cloud for a covering; and fire to give light in the night. The people asked, and he brought quails, and satisfied them with the **bread of heaven** (Ps 105:37-40).*

**N**o one needs to debate about this: the way God took care of the hundreds of thousands of Hebrew children in the wilderness for forty years is miraculous and a wonder of wonders. The Psalmist sang this beautiful song concerning the miraculous deliverance from Egypt. God brought more than half a million people out of Egypt and watched over them in the wilderness of Sinai. When they came out, he brought them out with booties from the land of slavery. He miraculously provided food and water for them in the desert where there was not a drop of water or vegetation.

Only the Almighty could have performed such wonders. Only He could have provided water for six hundred thousand people in the dry desert of Sin. Only He could feed that multitude with bread to their satisfaction and even give them quails for meat to eat. Not only did He give them meat to eat, there was more than enough. The El-Shaddai was true to His name; when He led them through the wilderness, He was more than enough for them.

They didn't have to grow, buy, or carry their food. Before dawn, before they woke up in the morning, He rained food from heaven. The food was always fresh and sweet, and it allowed them to travel in otherwise uninhabitable places. Enemy nations were not provided for as they were, and no nation would have survived under similar circumstances. The Almighty was with them, and the God of Jacob was their provider. He opened the Red Sea and made a smooth road for them to pass; He gave them water out of the rock.

*Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ (1 Cor 10:1-4).*

The bread that Israel ate was a picture of Christ, the Bread of Life. The water that they drank, which God gave them out of the Rock,

was a picture of the Water of Life. Christ is the Water of Life, and the rock that gave them water to drink is also a picture of Him.

They never had to worry about being hungry or sick. The bread that He rained from heaven upon them was sufficient for their every need; in fact, there was far more than they needed. In terms of volume, they went out, gathered the amount they needed, and there was surplus left in the fields. The excess manna simply melted away in the heat of the sun. Jehovah God, our El-Shaddai, always provides much more than we need. He is able and ready *to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us* (Eph 3:19). He has prepared more than enough for us to eat, and the measure of our hunger determines the amount that we consume. What is left over is never wasted, but simply returns to the source. Your capacity is determined by the degree of your hunger for the Bread of Heaven.

But there was more to the sufficiency of the manna than its plenteous volume. It also provided every ingredient that was needed to keep the children of Israel vital, strong, and healthy.

The manna was sufficient for all their needs. It contained all the ingredients that they needed for nourishment, all the vitamins they needed for vitality, and all the medicine they needed to stay healthy and strong. It was medicine to all their bones and kept away sicknesses and diseases from their midst.

Through this, the Holy Spirit is telling us that the true manna which God has sent down from heaven to us is sufficient for all our needs. It is sufficient to supply all necessary nourishment for our spirits, souls, and bodies. It will supply us with health and vitality. It is designed to meet our daily needs spiritually, mentally, physically, and financially. When God prepared this special manna in heaven, He packaged all these blessings in it and scheduled them to be delivered to us on a daily basis.

Have you ever thought about this? They did not carry any first-aid kits with them, nor did they have doctors to treat them for those forty years. They had young ones, old men and women, and even

pregnant women. Their wives gave birth during those hot and gruesome days of journeying in the dry and hostile desert. In fact, a great percentage of the generation that entered the land of promise was born in the wilderness under those humanly impossible conditions. How did this happen? The Almighty, *to Whom all things are possible*, was their Keeper.

How did those Hebrew children with their fragile infants survive a forty-year journey on foot in the wilderness of Sin? Yes, you got it, Jehovah preserved them. Their Rock was with them. He was their shelter, their shield, and their defender. He spread His Glory Cloud over them for a covering during the hot days and protected them from being scorched to death by the hot sun. At night, the Pillar of Fire protected them from attacks and gave them light.

How did they survive the onslaught of wild animals in the desert? What kept the serpents and scorpions away from them as they slept in the desert? Yes, you got it! He was their rock and buckler. Jehovah was their hiding place. The Rock that followed them not only gave them water, but was also their hiding place.

As I meditate on these wonderful revelations of what the people of God experienced on their journey, my spirit is rejoicing with a song that we used to sing. The song is about the same Rock that followed them; it goes this way:

*The Rock that never fails, let me hide in You,  
Let me hide in You, in You there is power.*

This Rock is the hiding place for the mighty ones. It is the refuge and the defense for the overcomers. It is their place of refreshing and of restoration. It is their source of water when they are weary, and their shelter in times of storm.

The solid rock also provides a stable foundation upon which one can build a lasting structure. It forms an unshakable foundation on which one can stand. The words of the song “My faith is built on nothing less than Jesus’ blood and righteousness” come to mind. The chorus

of this song goes this way: *On Christ the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand.*

Let's turn our attention back to Moses and the people of God as they made their way through the wilderness. In the eighth chapter of Deuteronomy, Moses continued to remind them of the supernatural sustenance they received from God in their journey. The Rock of their salvation was ever present with them.

As we meditate on what God did for them, let us be confident in this very fact: that their Rock is also our Rock and He will come through for us in our days. In this chapter, Moses began to remind the children of Israel of the wonders that the Lord God performed on their behalf. He told them how God supernaturally preserved the children of Israel during the forty years as they journeyed through the wilderness:

*Thy raiment hath not become old upon thee, neither hath thy foot swelled these forty years. Thou shalt also consider in thy heart, that as a man chasteneth his son, so the LORD thy God chasteneth thee. Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him (Deu :5-6).*

This is indeed is a wonder of wonders. God's glory was upon them. His covering was so real upon them that their clothes did not wear out for forty years. This was of course necessary because there were no tailors in the desert where they traveled. And even if there were, where would they get the materials to make new clothes? So God caused their clothes to remain as they were, without wearing out, for forty years. This is even more wondrous when you consider that their sandals, upon which they walked on the desert sands and climbed the rugged hills, did not wear out. And the greatest marvel of it all is that their feet, upon which they walked for hundreds of miles, were not affected: no swelling whatsoever. What an indescribable preservation by the God of their fathers.

The journey was long and wearisome, and they traveled over rough wilderness terrain. But God kept them healthy and strong, maintained their footwear, and protected their feet from swelling.

They were a healthy people, with not one feeble one in their midst, except when they disobeyed the Lord. God had given them the bread of the mighty. In doing this, He demonstrated to us, through their lives and their wilderness journeying, that He is the God of provision and of supply. He is our Jehovah-Jireh.



# Chapter 5

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## *Shall Not Live By Bread Alone*

*And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread (Matt 4:4).*

**T**he Lord Jesus Christ had just finished His forty days of fasting and prayer in the wilderness, living literally on His Father's words. Now He was hungry, and then the Tempter showed up. *"If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread,"* the Tempter said. The Lord had completed His fast at this time, and He was truly hungry after forty days of absolute fast. You and I may not see anything wrong with the Lord performing such a miracle, and many modern-day miracle workers might even revel in such a performance, but not so with our Lord Jesus.

Here is the big deal. Whose words would He be obeying if He had turned those stones into bread? Whose will would He be carrying out? Would He be carrying out the will of the Father? Did the Father say anything about turning stones into bread for breaking His fast? No! Not at all. He would have been carrying out the desires of the evil one if He had done that. He would have been listening to the flesh and satisfying its cravings, not living by every word that proceeded out of the mouth of God. The Son of God did and said only what the Father told Him to do and say: nothing more, nothing less.

Now let's read His reply, and it will be clearer why He replied the way He did. He answered and said, *"It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God'"* (Matthew 4:3,4).

In this sentence, the Lord Jesus expressed precisely what defines Him and sets Him apart from us. He lived by the fresh Word of God. He is the revelation of the will of God among us. His bread is to do the will of the Father. And this was the original design for man when God made him and his ultimate destination.

In the Gospel of John, we find the Lord Jesus with His disciples in Samaria. Here again we find Him breaking every Jewish religious rule. We find Him among the Samaritans, a people transplanted into Israel from Babylon several centuries earlier by the king of Babylon during Israel's seventy-year captivity. Pious Jews considered this land "unclean," and would go around Samaria while travelling from Judaea to Galilee rather than set foot on the so-called unclean soil that might contaminate their feet. But the Lord had the audacity not only to travel through and stop over at Samaria, but also to speak to a woman in public. To make the matter worse, the woman He talked with was a Samaritan. Not only that, she had had five husbands and was living with another man to whom she was not married.

The disciples had just left for the city to look for food. Knowing that Jesus had no food, they brought Him some and offered it to Him so He might eat.

*In the mean while his disciples prayed him, saying, Master, eat. But he said unto them, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of." Therefore said the disciples one to another, "Hath any man brought him ought to eat?"*

*Jesus saith unto them, "My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. Say not ye, 'There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest?' Behold, I say unto you, 'Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest'"* (John 4:31-34, KJV)

Note that the term “meat” used in this passage does not refer to animal flesh: here and in many passages in the King James Bible, it means provision in general. For example, the Lord said, *“Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment (Matt 6:25)?...Nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves: for the workman is worthy of his meat (Matt 10:10)...Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season (Matt 24:45)?”* These are a few examples the Lord using the term “meat” to represent food and other provisions.

In the passage of Scripture above, the Lord Jesus told His disciples and is telling us that His food was to do the will of the Father and to finish His work. He also told us in the Gospels that He and the Father are one (John 4:34; John 10:30; John 10:38). He was set apart to do the will of the Father. That was His food; that was His total ambition.

*Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God. Above when he said, Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin thou wouldest not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; Then said he, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God (Heb 10:7 ).*

The High Priest of Israel had a mitre on His head marked with the Hebrew words “Holiness unto the Lord,” meaning “separated unto Yahweh.” He was called and set apart to bear the Word of God and the expression of His will on his forehead. He was separated to carry out God’s will and fill his mind with God’s word. God’s will was his daily food for thought and meditation.

And so it was with our Lord Jesus while He walked here on earth; His daily bread was doing the will of the Father. Though He ate physical food, that was not what He lived by. He lived by the fresh Word that proceeded out of the mouth of Jehovah. He did not even listen to the voices of His own flesh; no, even in the Garden of Gethsemane, He submitted to the will of the Father God. *Not mine will but thine be*

*done* was His ultimate resolve. His heart had no room for any other opinion. He was obedient to His Father and manifested His works.

We need this message so much in the present-day church. The message of seeking the will of God and putting His desire first and foremost is little known to us. Most of what we hear from the pulpit has to do with what would satisfy our fleshly desires. He gave us manna so we could have vibrant and fulfilling lives on this earth; however, we decided to major in the manna, not realizing that it is perishable and lasts but for a day. We have fed on the manna, but being hungry still, we become completely occupied with gathering the quails, mounting them up heaps upon heaps, not caring that though our Father God provided the quails, this is not the delight of His heart nor His desire for us. The quails are most of what we call prosperity in this present day and age; like quails, these things satisfy our greedy appetites and fleshly cravings.

But my prayer today is that our lot will not be like theirs, for while they greedily and lustfully consumed the quails that God gave them in answer to their request, His anger was kindled upon them. I pray that He will have mercy upon us of this new generation.

We are so much unlike Christ, even in our ministering. I have given this a lot of thought, and each time I asked myself what some of us, especially some of our evangelists, would have done if we had been the one to whom the tempter put the request in Matt 4:3? Suppose one of us, a great miracle worker, has been fasting for, say, three weeks, and a suggestive voice, be it of a man or an angel, urges him or her to perform such a miracle of converting stones into bread. What do you suppose such a one would do? Being the exhibitionists that we are in this age, we would probably capitalize on the opportunity and put on a show or a grand performance. We'd claim to be doing it for the propagation of the gospel and for the glory of God, but in truth, it would be for fleshly satisfaction and to show the world how great we really are. Not only would we turn the stones into bread, we would most likely broadcast it on every television station for the whole world to see. We would of course say that we were giving all the glory

to the Lord, but all the while, we'd be stealing it. This is the kind of people we still are, but, blessed be God, we know we shall be like Him.

Let's return to Deuteronomy, where our Lord spoke the words of the key passage of this chapter. Moses gathered the new generation who were preparing to enter into the Land of Promise and began to charge them to obey the Lord God as they went in. The original generation that came out of Egypt had passed away, except for the two overcomers who wholly followed the Lord. The entire adult multitude that grumbled, murmured, and complained against the Lord perished in the wilderness. Unto them also was the promise of entering into the Land given, but they all came short of it.

*Let us therefore fear, lest, a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of you should seem to come short of it.*

*For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.*

*For we which have believed do enter into rest, as he said, As I have sworn in my wrath, if they shall enter into my rest (Heb 4:1).*

The Apostle is solemnly warning us not to fall short of the great promises that God has made to us through unbelief, like them.

Let's read what Moses said to them again: *And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no.*

*And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live (Deut 8:2-3).*

In this passage of Scripture, we can see the cause of all their fretting: God humbled them, caused them to hunger, and then fed them with manna. They ate the manna, they were filled, and it met their

physical needs such that there was no feeble person among their tribes, but it did not satisfy their carnal appetites, and they soon wearied of it. They ate and ate till they were full, but still felt hungry, and not knowing where to go for the satisfaction of that hunger, they murmured and grumbled against the El-Shaddai. They even went to the extent of saying that they loathed the heavenly food that God provided for them.

*And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread (Num 21:5).*

What an ungrateful bunch! They spoke against the Lord God in the most hateful language possible. You notice that they used a very strong word here. The word “loathe” means to regard with extreme dislike, to *abhor* and consider something to be utterly *detestable*. It is one of the strongest words to describe something one greatly hates.

For goodness’ sake! How could these people use such language to describe the heavenly food that the Gracious One provided for them? But before we get carried away in passing judgment, let’s realize that this is us in the mirror. We’re just like them, or better put, they are just a portrayal of us. Their words and attitude against Him explain why God was so displeased with them that He sent fiery serpents among them. Without doubt, in the strongest language possible, they showed Jehovah that the manna He provided for them did not satisfy their cravings. After they had eaten it for a while, they said, “*We are sick and tired of it... give us flesh to eat.*”

They grumbled and forgot His works and the wonders that He had shown them. They refused to walk in His law. They tempted and provoked the Most High God, and spoke strongly against Him. They trusted not in His salvation and limited the Holy One of Israel. They despised Him, saying, “Can God provide flesh? Can He set a table in the wilderness?” (Ps 78, paraphrased)

This was not the first time they had grumbled and fussed about their food. Earlier, at a place called Tabera, their bitter complaints had

displeased the Lord and caused the fire of the Lord to consume some of them. At this time, the mixed multitude were overcome by lust.

*And the mixed multitude that was among them fell a lusting: and the children of Israel also wept again, and said, Who shall give us flesh to eat?*

*We remember the fish, which we did eat in Egypt freely; the cucumbers, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlick: But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes (Num 11:4-6).*

The manna exposed what was in their hearts, just as it was designed to do. This supernatural food kept them healthy and strong, immunized them against diseases and infirmities, for forty years in the wilderness. This bread gave life to their flesh, but did not satisfy their carnal appetites.

What we need to carefully consider in this whole episode is the fact that God heard their grumbling and complaining and answered, granting them their request, though all the while His heart was full of grief because of their rebellious spirits. He gave them the desire of their hearts.

You might ask, "How could God answer the prayer of this kind of a people?" Should we even call their way of presenting their request praying? It was more like grumbling and complaining. The merciful and gracious God had to put up with these disgruntled people who provoked Him to anger again and again for forty years. They spoke against Him, castigated His provision, and demanded that their lustful appetites be satisfied with flesh.

Despite their unbelief, waywardness, and rebellion, despite all their strong words against Him, and despite the fact that He knew their request originated from their fleshly lusts and cravings, He hearkened to their cries and granted their request. He gave them flesh to eat to their heart's content. He sent Moses to them, saying:

*For ye have wept in the ears of the LORD, saying, Who shall give us flesh to eat? for it was well with us in Egypt: therefore the LORD will give you flesh, and ye shall eat.*

*Ye shall not eat one day, nor two days, nor five days, neither ten days, nor twenty days; But even a whole month, until it come out at your nostrils (Num 11:17-20).*

God indeed answered their prayers by sending them quails in abundance, but they did not understand the irony in His reply; they were too consumed in their passion for satisfying their lust to notice. God was answering the prayers of a carnally minded people, a people who hated the manna that He had made for them, a people whose hearts were alienated from Him. God sent the quails in such abundance that they had only to reach out at arm's length to grasp the birds flying about three feet above the ground. Unlike the manna that they had to stoop low to gather, they only needed to reach out to grab these birds. God made it really easy for them to satisfy their passion. Yet they did not understand the sarcasm (Num. 11:32).

The Bible tells us they gathered so much that "he that gathered least gathered ten omers." I understand from a commentary that 10 omers is approximately 86 gallons of quail meat; and that's for the one who gathered the least amount! This is gluttony of the rankest order. There are no deep freezers in the wilderness and they were on the move, so what on earth would a single person do with 86 gallons of quail?

But the spirit of God is asking us this same question today. He's asking us what we are going to do with all the goods we are amassing for the future. The natural man is greedy and often displays excessive madness in his quest for material things. We have heard of men who stole billions of dollars from the treasury of their nation, where the average income is less than a hundred dollars a month. What are they going to do with such billions in a country where their fellow countrymen cannot afford to provide 3 square meals a day for their families? It is avarice, pure and simple; it is inexplicable madness.



But, dear reader, let's not forget the message that the Holy Ghost is passing to us, and let's return to the lesson. God answered the Israelites' prayers and supplied them with flesh to eat to their heart's content. They gathered as much as they needed to satisfy the lust of their eyes and the cravings of their flesh. Their lust was so appalling to God that while they were eating lustfully, His anger was kindled against them and He sent a plague, a wasting disease among them that killed many of them. And this place where many of them who lusted were buried became known as the *graves of longing*. There God answered their prayers and satisfied their carnal appetites with feasting, but while they were satisfying their lustful appetites, they were wasting away in the *valley of desire*, and were buried in the *graves of longing*; For to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

Let's come home and apply this to ourselves this day and hour, for everything that happened to them is an example for us, unto whom the end of the world is come. We have to take heed of what we pursue. We have to watch what we insist on as we ask God for things in our prayers. We must seek His will and desire to follow His will in all things. If we do not, if we insist on our own way and adamantly insist on getting Him to satisfy our lustful appetites for things, He might just answer the prayers, even though it might grieve His heart of love. Let's understand that if we insist on going our own way, the Almighty God might not stop us; He might even answer the prayers and grant the desires. Today, we seem to pursue things like the people of the world, even though we who are born of God are to seek the kingdom of God and its righteousness.

I wonder if everything upon which we concentrate our spiritual energy in the church, which we call prosperity, is not akin to the longings for flesh in the *valley of desire*. I hope to God that we have not seriously missed the mark, all the while telling God's people that we are rich and prosperous because we have found the secret to prosperity and that God has answered our prayers for riches and wealth while we are grieving His heart by fulfilling our lustful appetites. We might be celebrating our success in receiving great

answers to prayers for the prosperity that surrounds us; so much so that we need only stretch out our arms to grab the delicious quails that our prayers of faith have wrought. But, while boasting that we, the King's kids, are feasting upon the good things of Canaan, we are really in the valley of lustful desire, and only His mercies that goad us to repentance will deliver us from becoming partakers with them in the *graves of longing*. Just like his people in the wilderness of Sin, we indeed do not understand His ways. Without doubt, we've seen and experienced His wonderful acts, but His ways we know not.

I know you will say, "But the answer to these prayers came from God, and it was even accompanied by the miraculous." Yes, I know. If you go back and read the passage we're considering, not only did God answer their prayers, but in the midst of their carnal cravings, God released a further portion of His Spirit upon the elders of Israel. Prophetic utterances came forth through the elders of Israel while God was preparing a feast of quail for the disobedient and rebellious people. And a multitude of quail came flying into the wilderness from the sea, such that every gatherer in a population of six hundred thousand could gather at least 86 gallons. Tell me what the miraculous are, if these aren't! But what we must emphasize is this: that God is loving and affectionate, just as the names of the two men who prophesied in the camp, Eldad and Meldad, indicate, and that He poured down His blessing in spite of them. God was still answering the prayers of the carnally minded people, a people whose hearts were alienated from Him.

The lesson in the manna is simply this: that if our hearts are not set on abiding in and becoming acquainted with His ways, this divine provision that God intended to drive us to Him will leave us vulnerable to the cravings of our own fleshly lusts. If we do not learn to find our delight in God and in His Word, we are going to try to find delight in our own carnal ways. This probably explains why the Church in our generation, especially in the areas of wealth, has been almost totally captivated with carnal desire and appetites. The hunger that we experience in this wilderness should, through our faith, drive us closer to the heart of God—not toward getting stuff to

satisfy the flesh. The hunger is not to make us pursue more bread, but to make us learn that *man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*

I hope it is clear that when the Scriptures talk about bread, it is symbolic of more than just the wheat loaf or even the food that we eat. When we pray to God to “give us this day our daily bread,” we are not just asking for bread, but for all the provisions we need for living. This include our food, clothing, lodging, transportation, tuition, recreation, and all the daily expenses that we need for ourselves and our families. Our daily bread includes all that we need to live a vibrant, joyous, and satisfied life, all that will make us mentally and physically competent. Manna can be seen as the substance that our natural and carnal lives depend on. As long as we are living in this flesh, we need this bread.

However, in the passage that we are meditating on, the Lord Jesus said that though man needs this bread, man shall not live by it alone. We need some material things in this world to survive, but there are other things more important for life. Man shall not live by material things alone, but by spiritual things, and these are more lasting. Material things are short-lived and ephemeral; the Word of God is the lasting substance that we can live on. This is one of the lessons that God teaches us through the provision of the manna in the wilderness. This bread only lasts for a day; it cannot be stored for the next day; it is short-lived and temporal, just like all the material things that we need to survive in this material world. Jehovah made sure that the manna He rained down on His people could not be stored. Apart from His plan to train them to trust Him daily, this prevented the greedy ones from grabbing more than their share and storing it up for themselves while depriving others of their fair share. Each of us has an allotment of the manna assigned to us by Jehovah, an omer for each person, and no one can take yours from you. May God Almighty lead us, the Church, to know that every member of the Body of Christ has an allotment from Jehovah, the Preparer of the manna.

Jehovah God knew that His children needed their daily bread, so He prepared the fresh angel food and sent it to them every morning. In the same manner, our heavenly Father knows our needs, and He'll supply the daily manna. These material things which He daily provides for us will take care of all our natural needs, but will not satisfy the spiritual hunger inside of us. In fact, they are designed to keep us hungry, and this hunger is to draw us closer to the Living God, who has the Bread of Life.

May God help us, this day and hour, as we enjoy the prosperity that He has rained down on us, that we may know that man doth not live by bread alone, but by every Word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord,

# Chapter 6

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## *The Living Bread*

*I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world (John 6:51).*

**I**n the two remaining chapters of this book we will switch into a new gear. In the preceding chapters, the Holy Spirit began to explain to us the purpose of the manna and its divine secrets. We saw how this miraculous food that came out of heaven supernaturally sustained the people of God in the wilderness for forty years. Indeed, it was totally miraculous. It was a sign and a wonder.

Although the manna contained supernatural ingredients that God designed and produced to take care of all the physical, mental, and medical needs of His people, it was in no sense an ultimate provision. It was not the ultimate provision that God had planned for His people from the foundation of the earth. It was not the Living Bread that Jehovah had been preparing for His people to be released at the appropriate time. Manna was a temporary provision for a wilderness people.

As the Holy Ghost showed us in the previous chapters, this wilderness bread was perishable. It lasted for only a day, and afterwards became rotten and bred worms. It left those who consumed it full, but unsatisfied. They ate and ate and yet remained hungry for something else; not knowing where to go to satisfy this

strange hunger, they sought for things to satisfy their fleshly desires. They ate the manna and still died, because it was not designed to give them life; it was not the Bread of Life, but only a sign pointing to the future, when the Almighty will send down the true Bread of God and bring eternal life to all who partake of Him.

Those who ate the manna hungered again and died at last, and with many of them God was not well pleased; whereas they who feed on the true Manna shall never hunger, shall die no more, and with them God will be forever pleased, for they are made acceptable by the Beloved.

So the manna was a temporary provision for a wilderness people, sent out of heaven to reveal God's eternal purpose. This eternal purpose of providing the manna was to lead His people to the true Bread that endures unto everlasting life. His eternal plan is to provide the Bread which satisfies and produces life eternal, and to give the living Water, which makes the drinker never thirst again. The Lord Jesus said, "*Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed*" (John 6:27).

So then, let's re-emphasize that the manna from heaven was not the true bread of life. While it may have been quite miraculous, this miracle was only to serve as a sign pointing to the true Manna, the Bread of Life, Jesus Christ, the ultimate Provision of God for humanity.

In the sixth chapter of the gospel of John, we read the account of the miraculous provision of bread for more than five thousand people. The Lord Jesus miraculously fed the multitude by multiplying five loaves and two fishes, and there were twelve baskets left over. The following day, the people who were fed went looking everywhere for Him. They traveled by boats to Capernaum seeking for Him, and after they had found Him, *they asked Him, 'Rabbi, when did you get here?'* (John 6:25 NIV)

But the Lord knew that they were seeking Him, not because they desired to receive the word of God or because of the supernatural

signs, but primarily because of the loaves and the fishes that He had provided for them the day before. So He said unto them, "*Truly, truly I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate the loaves and were completely satisfied; Do not work for the food that perishes but for the food that lasts for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you*" (John 6:26-27).

In this verse, the Lord is indirectly repeating the words He spoke when the devil tempted Him. He is not saying we should not work to provide food for our families; He's saying that *man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God*. It becomes men to work to provide bread for themselves and their families, but they should not be anxious about it, or labor only for that bread, or prefer it to their spiritual food.

He then proceeded to tell them and us what to labor for. We are to labor for the Bread that lasts for eternal life. This Bread can be found only in Christ Jesus, whom God has chosen and prepared to be the Bread of Life.

We must ponder on the message in this phrase spoken by our Master, for it carries more than the superficial import. *Labor not for the bread that perishes* is the admonition, and it is full of meanings. The perishable food He talks about here includes the food for the mind, all the sensuous stuff men feed on, the honors of this world, and the riches therein, which are all sweet desserts that carnal minds labor hard to obtain. This futile labor even includes man's religious superstitions, his will worship, and his external works of righteousness in order to please God and obtain salvation. These are labors for food that perishes, but He urges us to labor for that which endures eternally. This fruitful labor is to partake of Him, the Bread of Life, whom God has provided.

You would then ask, "What, then, is the labor? If it does not include good works and religious service, what is it?" We must remember that the miraculous food God provided for the Israelites in the wilderness required some labor. Man had no part in the preparation of the manna, but he had to receive it. They had to go out early in the

morning, stoop down, and gather those tiny wafers that descended with the dew. It was laborious. It was different from the quails, the animal flesh, that they demanded from Jehovah to satisfy their cravings; then, they did not need to labor, they just reached out their hands, gathered quails into a heap, and ate until the meat came out of their nostrils. Not so with the manna; they had to labor to gather enough wafers for themselves and their families. Just as with the manna, labor is required to partake in the Bread of Life.

Though there is a labor for every partaker, it is not to purchase it, but a labor of faith to receive the gift from God. This Bread of Life is God's gift, and He gives freely to all, but one must cut through the hindrances to one's faith to receive it. Hence the admonition of the Apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrews, which goes thus: *Let us therefore labor to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief* (Heb 4:11).

There is a labor through which we can enter into a present rest which our God has prepared for us. There is a labor that will allow us to partake of the Bread of Heaven daily, and thereby enjoy the abundant life that the Living Bread provides in the here and now. Note that this rest spoken about in the Book of Hebrews, which the believers now enter into, is available for them at this present time (Heb 4:3). This is the provision that God has made to give the believers true peace and joy in Christ. It is intended to transport them into the realm of quietness and confidence, of imperturbableness and security, of spiritual and mental prosperity, and of that blessed assurance. Since this is a realm of faith that does not agree with the senses, we must labor in word to enter into it. Likewise, a natural man will need to labor in the Word of God before he or she can even consider partaking in the flesh and blood of the Son of Man.

Let's return to the discussion between the Lord and the Jews that we were narrating above. We got to the point where He was telling them that they sought Him not because of the miraculous ministry, but because of their carnal appetites. After He had told them not to labor for the perishables, but for that which lasts for eternity, they asked



Him, “*What must we do to perform the works of God?*” (John 6:28) His reply seemed unsatisfactory to those law-minded Jews. He told them that the work of God was to believe in Him whom the Father had sent. Again, here He is saying that God does not require any good works to qualify us for eternal life; all He requires is faith in Christ Jesus, *for the just shall live by faith.*

*This is the work of God that ye believe.* The work of faith is the work of God. You will notice that these Jews inquire after the *works* of God, for they are careful about *many things*; but Christ directs them to one work and one work only. He tells them of the one thing that is needful for them: to *believe in Him whom the Father has sent.* This supersedes all the works of the law, and it is the only work necessary for acceptance before the Almighty, for without faith it is impossible to please God.

Seeing that the Lord declared that *faith in Him* is the only work that is required to be acceptable to God, these skeptical Jews then asked Him to show them more signs, so that they might see and believe. They were always seeking and requiring signs and wonders, and when they saw one, they still asked for more. In fact, they had just seen several instances of the sick being healed, as well as the feeding of more than five thousand people with five loaves and two fishes.

However, on this day, they were not seeking other signs; they preferred the miraculous feeding of Israel in the wilderness to all the other miracles Christ wrought ([Joh 6:31](#)): *So they said to him, "What sign are you going to do so that we may see it and believe in you? What work are you performing? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, just as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat' (Joh 6:30-31).* To strengthen their point, they quoted a Scripture from Psalms 78:24: *He gave them bread from heaven.* But the Lord chided them for their fondness for bread, and bade them not set their hearts upon the *meat which perishes*; and this should be a warning to us. Like them, we of this age are completely overtaken by the desire for the bread that perishes (our so-called prosperity), and we miss the bread that lasts eternally.

In their quest to make the Lord perform more miracles of provision, these Jews tried to compare His works with that of the provision of manna in the desert. They were in effect saying that Christ had fed five thousand of them with barley loaves and fishes for one meal, but that their fathers in the time of Moses, numbering more than six hundred thousand, were fed with manna for the space of forty years. They were in effect telling Him that unless he performed as great a miracle as the wilderness manna, and a miracle of that same kind, they would not think it fit to relinquish Moses and follow him. And they supported this with Scripture from Psa 78:24: *He gave them bread from heaven to eat.*

Those cunning Jews tactfully left out the subject “*the Lord*” in the passage, making it look as if the passage was referring to Moses, to whom they ascribed the miracle, as we see from the reply of the Lord Jesus.

Then the Lord Jesus replied to them, saying: *“Truly, truly I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world” (John 6:32-34).*

In this reply, the Lord said two important things that must be clear to us: First, that Moses had no hand in the provision of the manna in the wilderness. He did not even pray for it, much less procure or provide it. It was promised, prepared, and rained down from heaven by Jehovah the El-Shaddai One. It was also Jehovah who instructed them as to when to gather it and how much. This was to correct their erroneous notion that the manna was given by Moses and on account of his merits.

The second important message is in the latter part of the second half of His reply: *“It is my Father who gives you the **true** Bread from Heaven.”* In the first half of the reply, He said it was not Moses who gave them the bread from heaven, but in the second half of His statement, He referred to the **true** Bread. In the first half, He was

referring to the manna, which, although was food that came out of the heavens, was not the true Bread of Heaven.

He then spoke to them of the *true* Manna, saying, "*But my Father giveth you the true Bread from heaven.*" He is therefore saying to them, not to *their fathers* who are dead and gone, and to us of this present age, for whom the *better things were reserved*, that the true *Bread from Heaven*, of which the manna was but a shadow and figure, has now been *given*.

After they had listened and heard these words, they then said to Him, "*Sir, give us this bread all the time*" (John 6:34 NIV) or "*Lord, evermore give us this bread*" (KJV).

Then the Lord 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 6:35).

*I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead, this is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world"* (Joh 6:47-51).

At that point, many of His followers left Him. They'd had it with Him. This message was far too hard for them to digest. Even His closest disciples began to wonder what He meant. But though they did not understand, they decided to remain with Him, for they knew He had the words of Life.

Dear friend, this is something worthy of emulation. It's possible you are passing through some things you don't understand at this moment; perhaps you are going through a dry valley or finding yourself at Marah, or perhaps something the Lord said is strange and inexplicable to you. Don't bolt away from fellowship with Him. Hold on, my friend, hold fast to Him, for only He has the words of life, and He is forever faithful.

Of course the Lord was not talking about them literally eating His flesh and drinking His blood. It was a sort of symbolism. No one ever literally ate His flesh and drank His blood. The Catholics believe they have found the meaning of what He said through the Eucharist. They believe, due to the priests' consecration of small wafers, that they are in fact eating the very body of Jesus Christ. This is not so. And they seem to have taken away the blood from their ritual, so their remembrance is therefore *without the Blood*.

How do we partake of His flesh and His blood? In a way, our partaking in the Holy Communion is a fulfillment of this command, and we take His life into us when we receive the element of the bread and His blood when we drink the wine. These are symbolic, and they represent the broken body and shed blood of our Lord and Savior. However, we really eat His flesh and drink His blood when we consume His words and absorb them into our systems by meditation and prayer.

This is abiding in Him in communion and thereby enabling Him to abide in us. As we abide in Him, we gradually begin to look like Him. We are being transformed into His likeness; His will becomes our will, and His desire becomes our passion. This is what He means when He says, "*He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him*" (John 6:56); or as He says elsewhere, "*If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him*" (John 14:23). Thus it is only through *eating His flesh or keeping His words* that we abide in Him and He in us. We must meditate or chew on the Word, digest the Word, and assimilate the Word into our spirits.

*How sweet are thy words unto my taste, yea sweeter than honey to my mouth* (Psa. 119:103).

The true Bread of Heaven then *is* the Word of God, whom the Father has sent, and we eat this Living Bread when we abide in Him and are totally dominated by His will. This was how He lived while He was here. We hear Him speak in the Book of Psalms and quoted in the Epistle to the Hebrews saying, "*Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume*

*of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart” (Psa 40:8). And in the gospels He again affirms this: “I have come down from heaven, not to do My will, but the will of Him who sent me (John 6:39). My food is to do the will of Him Who sent me and to finish His work” (John 4:34).*

Dear ones, let’s cultivate a habit that will help bring us closer to Him and help us to feed on this Bread daily. First, we must daily enter His Courts with praise. Then, we follow this by receiving His Word into us. We receive the Word and the Blood; we eat the Word and we drink the Blood. Then we begin to ruminate on it in the same way that certain animals chew the cud. We cogitate on the Word until our systems digest and absorb it into our spirits. After that, we take the final step, which is to live by every one of the words that proceeds out of His mouth. We then abide in His Presence.

*Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O Lord God of hosts (Jeremiah 15:16).*

# Chapter 7

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## *The Hidden Manna*

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

**L**et's now turn our attention, in this final chapter, to the Holy of Holies behind the second veil of the Tabernacle of the Most High. On the outside, there is the manna for all to eat. Beyond this and beyond the outer court, the priests enter into the Holy Place, where there is Shewbread prepared weekly for them to eat. The manna is perishable and lasts a day. The Shewbread is there before the golden candlestick and lasts a week. But there is yet a realm to enter.

There is a higher realm beyond the outer court where the crowd gather manna; there is even a higher realm than the Holy Place where the priests eat the Shewbread; this is the realm of the Most Holy, and Jehovah God has prepared the hidden Manna there for the overcomers who would press into this ultimate realm.

As you enter the Holy Place and pass through the second veil into the Holy of Holies, you'll see one unique item—*the Ark of the Testimony*. This represents Christ. There is nothing else in the Holy of Holies besides Christ, the Ark of His Presence. In there, we see Christ and

Christ alone. As we draw closer to Him and experience Him, we begin to see more; we see three divine items in the Ark.

First, we see the Tablets of the Covenant, which God wrote, gave to Moses the second time, and instructed him to keep in the Ark out of the reach of any man. Here they are, out of man's reach, eternally safe and secure from being broken by man. The first one was broken; therefore, the second has been hidden in Christ, out of the reach of man, where it can never be broken. Christ is the fulfillment of the Law; the second Covenant was made between Jehovah God and Christ our Lord, and therefore is eternally secure.

The second item we see in the Ark is Aaron's rod that budded, which indicates the power of an endless life, as seen in Christ the true High Priest. This was that rod of God with which Moses and Aaron performed signs and wonders, and this was a type of Christ, through whom God has wrought wonders for the deliverance and miraculous provision for his people. It was a type of divine justice by which Christ the Rock was smitten for us, from whom the refreshing waters of life flow into our souls.

The final item in the Ark is the golden pot of manna, which is a type of the Bread of Life that is hidden in Christ. This speaks of the Hidden Manna that God has prepared for the overcomers, as written in the Book of Revelation. While the rest of the manna corrupted, bred worms, and stank if kept for a second day, that which they placed in the golden pot was preserved by the Shekinah glory of God which filled the ark.

*And Moses said, This is the thing which the LORD commandeth, Fill an omer of it to be kept for your generations; that they may see the bread wherewith I have fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you forth from the land of Egypt.*

*And Moses said unto Aaron, Take a pot, and put an omer full of manna therein, and lay it up before the LORD, to be kept for your generations (Exod. 16:32-33).*

The Ark was in the Holy of Holies. In the same way, those who dwell in the outer courts or even the inner court of the house of God, that

is, the Holy Place, will not find this treasure. Only when we partake in the Shewbread of the Holy Place and then press on to the Holy of Holies of God's presence do we find the true Bread of God.

The Word of God contains the Hidden Manna, and this is the food that God has provided for the overcoming ones. It is provision, food, sustenance, and life, but these are hidden and veiled to unbelievers and to many believers. It will not yield its secrets and depths to the casual passerby. All this truth is hidden in the Bible, in the language which only the Holy Spirit, the author of the Bible, can reveal to our spirits. It will only be unveiled to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. They will seek and they will find. They hunger and thirst after righteousness, and so they shall be filled. These are they who seek Him in Spirit and in Truth.

Christ Jesus our Lord, the Word of God, the Ark of God's Presence, contains the Hidden Manna. God wants us to feed upon Him, the Word. We must *eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, for Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word which proceeds from the mouth of God.* But let's understand that the Word that we are talking about is spirit and life. We are not talking about the letter or just studying and memorizing the Scripture. Memorizing Scriptures will *not* give one the *hidden manna*; *only* the spirit of the Word will. In fact, memorizing Scriptures may breed a Pharisee. We must never forget how Jesus once chided the greatest Bible memorizers, the Pharisees, with these words: *You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life. But they testify of Me, but you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life* (John 5:39, 40). The letter kills; it is the Spirit that gives life. We must seek the Spirit to reveal Christ, the Living Word, to our hearts.

There are three dimensions to the message of this chapter, in the same vein as in my earlier book titled "First The Blade". The first, which we shall group with the outer court experience, is the public manna. In the wilderness, the children of Israel enjoyed the manna, but the manna they enjoyed was public manna. It fell out of heaven to earth before the eyes of everyone, for the public to gather. It was not hidden in any way from anyone. This was open and obvious to



whoever would go out and gather, but this manna was perishable, for it lasted only a day, after which it bred worms and stank.

The second dimension is only open to the priesthood, the sons of the High Priest. This consisted of twelve loaves, set in two rows of six upon the table, that stood for a whole week in the Holy Place. These were replaced every Sabbath, while the old ones that had aged in the presence of the seven golden candlesticks were taken away and eaten by the priests. They were called Shewbread because they were continually set before the Lord. This was also intended as a memorial of the goodness of God in providing daily bread for His people.

The highest dimension takes us into the Holiest of All. Here Jehovah God has prepared the Hidden Manna for the overcomers. The Shewbread was displayed on the table, it was shown forth and seen by men. But the incorruptible manna is hidden in the golden pot in the ark. The hidden manna is definitely not for the public, but stored away in the presence of God, in the ark of His covenant. The promise of the Hidden Manna was not made to the whole church in Pergamos, but only to *him that overcometh*. The Lord Jesus ministered to men in power and great glory, but as a Son, He enjoyed a relationship with the Father that the multitudes and even His own closest disciples knew nothing of. And so it is with the overcomers, for they are the sons of God.

It is important to note that this Manna is hidden in the Ark from the reach of the natural man. It is not like the manna on the ground and in the lowlands of the corruption of our earthly plane. It is not of carnal man-made religion; it is not manna displayed, typified by the Shewbread prepared for the regular priest who only ministers in the Holy Place. It is true Manna, hidden in the secret place of the Most High. It is not manna for the crowd, not even for the multitudes of God's people, but for those who would press in and go beyond the veil. This is the Bread of Heaven, the Manna hidden in Christ.

There are many of us today, devout believers and ministers, who eat of the Shewbread in the holy place. In weekly gatherings, in conventions, on radio and television, in books and magazines, they

eat of that bread that is displayed. They eat of the bread that all can see and hear. It, like the manna, gives ephemeral life and strengthens them, but it does not give the measure of life that is in the Hidden Manna. It is like the milk for babes of which the Apostle wrote, while the Hidden Manna is strong meat hidden in Christ in the Most Holy Place.

The hidden manna given to the overcomer will bring incorruptible life! And as His divine life becomes our life, transforming us from the image of the earthly man into the image of the heavenly man, then the life of God shall flow out to the nations of the world through a true manifest sonship ministry until there has been brought into being a new heaven and a new earth. Aren't you glad? "As we *have* borne the image of the earthly, we *shall* also bear the image of the heavenly."

Dear Saint of the Most High, the Lord God is calling you and me to press in, pass the outer court, stop eating the bread of mediocrity, and press in beyond the Shewbread into the Holiest, where He has prepared the Hidden Manna for all who would dare to go all the way.

These ones will partake of the Bread that has been preserved for the overcomers, the bread of the mighty, the bread of the gods. These ones are gods; not in the same manner as the gods that the heathen worship, nor like the gods of money or self, nor like those gods which despots or some great men or even preachers make of themselves before their followers—these ones are gods because Jehovah Himself gave birth to them, they are by nature like Him, and He dwells in them. They are gods, and therefore Jesus Christ is God of gods; they are lords and He is Lord of lords; they are kings and He is King of kings; they are priests and He is the High Priest forever after the order of Melchisedek. It does not yet manifest in these ones as it did in Jesus Christ of Nazareth, but they are on their way. The Almighty gave birth to them, and their spirit is in God's class. "*Ye are gods; and all of you are children of the Most High,*" declared the Most High God in the eighty-second Psalm (Ps 82:6). He called them gods and therefore prepared for them the Bread of the gods, the Bread of Heaven or the Bread of the Mighty, to eat.

The manna in the wilderness gave the people life in a physical body, but this Manna will give you life in a spiritual body. *"I am the living bread,"* said Jesus, and this is *the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die* (Jn. 6:50). Those who ate of the manna in the wilderness died, but they who eat of the incorruptible life of Christ, the spiritual bread from heaven, are filled with divine and eternal life. They eat His flesh and drink His blood and are transformed; no more carnality, no more death, for they who have partaken of His flesh have eaten the Bread of the gods. What a hard saying.

Those who follow Christ all the way into the Holiest of All would eat of the Hidden Manna, and therefore the carnal mind and the corruption of the flesh will be swallowed up by His life. The corruptible will put on incorruption, and the mortal will put on immortality!

But we must press on, dear ones; we must by faith press into the realm of God if we are to be partakers with the overcomers. Flesh and blood cannot inherit these things; they are attained by faith. This is not manna or the bread of natural life, not the bread of religion, but the Bread of Heaven. It is not gathered from the fields, nor from the outer court, and therefore is inaccessible to the pedestrian, the casual observer, the carnal Christian, and even the present-day modernistic preacher. It is spiritually discerned. Modern-day sermons feed the believer with a lot of manna, which, true to its nature, is perishable and lasts the followers or churchgoers a day. It excites them for a few hours on Sunday, but decays exponentially toward the evening. Others feed themselves and their followers with the letter, making them good church workers and faithful contributors, but never latching on to the spirit of the Word. But the desire of God is only this: that His children will press in beyond the external manna and beyond material prosperity, and even beyond the Shewbread of ministry that is before the golden candlestick, and enter into the Holiest of All where He has hidden the food of His delight for them. There He is patiently waiting, as a father eagerly

waits to watch his little infant eat his first real food; Jehovah is waiting to see us eat the Bread of His delight.

Let us therefore put aside every weight that prevents us, and let us go beyond the manna-feasting crowd and press into the Holiest of All and partake of the Hidden Manna. The Spirit is sounding this in your ears like the sound of an end-time trumpet.

*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).*

Let us heed the cry of the Spirit; let us run this race set before us with perseverance. Let us run according to the rule, the rule of faith, and let us run until we win and are declared overcomers.

*He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.*

*And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:*

*He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.*

*To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.*

*And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely (Rev 2:17, 2:26, 3:5, 3:21, 21:6).*

These overcomers are the gods that worship the Almighty, the kings that continually cast down their crowns at His feet and serve the King of kings; these ones are the generation of the Melchisedek priesthood, the sons of the heavenly High Priest. They are the overcomers whom our Lord the Master Overcomer Himself brought forth and is not ashamed to call His sons. He clearly proclaimed this in the Book of Consummation, saying, *“He that overcometh shall*

*inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son” (Rev 21:7). They are not of this earth; their citizenship is in heaven, and therefore they feed not on earthly food, but on the Bread of Heaven.*

*May we be counted among them. Lord evermore give us this Bread, Amen.*

## ***Other Books by the Author***

1. Let This Mind Be In You
2. The Minister of the Sanctuary
3. My One Desire
4. There Is a River
5. First the Blade
6. Ye Shall Return
7. On Eagle's Wings
8. The Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation