

Exodus Chapter 16 Continued

Exodus 16:15 "And when the children of Israel saw [it], they said one to another, It [is] manna: for they wist not what it [was]. And Moses said unto them, This [is] the bread which the LORD hath given you to eat."

The "manna" literally means "What is it?"

Not only was it remarkable for its size, shape, color, taste and a variety of uses (16:14; 23, 31; Num. 11:7-8), but especially for its daily appearance at dawn, its tremendous abundance, its strange capacity for breeding worms at the end of each day, except the sixth, and its sudden and permanent disappearance as soon as the Israelites entered Canaan (Joshua 5:12).

It taught the people to look Godward for their daily bread, and it pointed toward the One who claimed to be the true bread from heaven, even "the bread of life" (John 6:32, 35).

Exodus 16:16 "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] which [are] in his tents."

Compare Exodus 12:4.

Each man was to gather according to his immediate need and that of his family.

No one was to seek to accumulate a store.

"For every man":

Literally, for every head.

As families would average four members, each man would have to gather, on an average, six quarts.

If even 500,000 men gathered this amount, the daily supply must have been 93,500 bushels.

An "omer", in our language, would be a little over five pints, slightly more than two quarts.

You see here, that five pints is what the average person would eat per day.

Some of the little ones, probably ate less and the big ones more, but it would average out.

The dad went out and gathered, and he brought enough for his own family.

You can easily see why a family of ten would need more than a family of five.

They were to get just one day's supply.

Exodus 16:17 "And the children of Israel did so, and gathered, some more, some less."

According as their families was, more or less numerous; or as the gatherers was, more or less strong and active in gathering it.

Exodus 16:18 "And when they did mete [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."

Each Israelite gathered what he supposed would be about an omer for each member of his family.

Some naturally made an over and some an under estimate.

But whatever the quantity collected, when it came to be measured in the camp, the result was always the same, there was found to be just an omer for each.

This result can only have been miraculous.

See (2 Cor. 8:15), where Paul applies this truth to Christian giving.

This was just repeating that, if they gathered five pints for each member of their family, it worked out just fine.

"Mete":

Means to measure.

Exodus 16:19 "And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning."

Moses must have been divinely instructed to issue this command.

It was doubtless given in order that the Israelites might realize their absolute dependence upon God for food from day to day, and might so be habituated to complete trust and confidence in Him.

They were to discipline themselves to one day's supply at a time.

This is similar to the song, "ONE DAY AT A TIME".

You see, God was teaching them that He was sufficient for their needs each day.

We are even warned ourselves about planning more than that, because we are not guaranteed tomorrow.

Exodus 16:20 "Notwithstanding 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."

Either distrusting God's providence, for a future supply, or out of curiosity to learn the nature of this manna, and what they might do if occasion required; it bred worms and stank.

Not so much of its own nature, which was pure and durable, as from God's judgment.

Thus will that be corrupted in which we do not trust in God, and which we do not employ for His glory.

Here we see greed in action, and what it did.

Many of the problems in society today are caused by the greed of the people.

Wanting something that does not belong to you, can cause robberies, lies, and even murder.

Even the thought of it is called coveting in the Bible.

One of the Ten Commandments is "Thou shalt not covet".

Some religions of our day tell people to claim things they have not worked to get, something that actually belongs to someone else.

This is a sin.

Thou shalt not covet thou neighbor's possessions.

Exodus 16:21 "And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating: and when the sun waxed hot, it melted."

As much of it as was left upon the ground, not, it seems, from its own nature, which was so solid that it could endure the fire.

But that it might not be corrupted, or trodden under foot, or despised, and that they might be compelled, as it were, to the more entire dependence upon God.

God took care of what was left in the fields.

He provided plenty, but no extra.

There were lessons to be learned, and God was teaching discipline.

Verses 22-26

Not only did the LORD miraculously provide manna for the people, but He also miraculously preserved manna from “the sixth day” for use on the “Sabbath” (called “the seventh day”; in Gen. 2:1-3).

The first mention of the term in Scripture.

In this, Israel learned to observe this day of “rest” even before the Ten Commandments were issued (20:8-11).

Exodus 16:22-23 "And it came to pass, [that] on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one [man]: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses." "And he said unto them, This [is that] which the LORD hath said, Tomorrow [is] the rest of the holy sabbath unto the LORD: bake [that] which ye will bake [today], and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning."

The provision of manna on 6 days only but none on the seventh was a weekly lesson on the nature of the Sabbath as a different day.

It taught the people to keep the Sabbath properly, and acted as a challenge to obey God’s commands.

"Seethe":

Means to boil, bake, or roast.

It appears from this that not only were they to gather it ahead one day, but they were to prepare it a day ahead, as well.

It was alright to eat on the Sabbath, but it was not alright for anyone to work.

This is a day God had set aside for them to have total rest.

This is just like all the other ordinances God made to help man.

These people got so technical about all of this, that they forgot why God had set this Sabbath of rest on the seventh day.

Jesus says in:

Mark chapter 2:27, "And he said unto them, The sabbath was made for man, and not man for the sabbath."

You see, this miracle bread could last as long as necessary.

It lasted two days, when they gathered it on Friday.

The Hebrew Sabbath lasted from 6 p.m. Friday until 6 p.m. Saturday.

This Manna soured, at God's command, not because of the number of days.

We will find in a later lesson, that a piece of this Manna stayed for years in the Ark of the Covenant without souring.

You see this miracle Bread was not subject to elements of this world.

Whatever situation you find yourself in, the Bread of life (Jesus), is sufficient to take care of it, whether it is for a day, or a lifetime.

This Sabbath, God was about to establish, was six days' work, one day rest.

This holds true, whether this day is an actual 24 hour period, or a year, or a 1,000 year period.

I have mentioned this before in another Bible study book, but it is worth repeating here.

Since Adam until now has been approximately 6000 years: I believe we are very close to the 1,000 year millennial reign of Jesus Christ on the earth (which is the 1,000 year sabbath rest for the believers).

Exodus 16:24 "And they laid it up till the morning, as Moses bade: and it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein."

What was left the omers per each man, what they had neither baked nor boiled.

"And it did not stink, neither was there any worm therein, which was the case, when it was left or laid up on other days; and it showed that there was an interposition of divine Providence in the keeping of it to this day, and clearly confirmed it to be the will of God that this day should henceforward be to them the rest of the holy sabbath.

God promised to supply our need, not our greed.

He gave them enough.

This miracle Bread can last as long as necessary.

Here, it lasted two days.

God was trying to teach them discipline and obedience.

As long as we obey the commands of God, every circumstance will work out best.

Exodus 16:25 "And Moses said, Eat that today; for today [is] a sabbath unto the LORD: today ye shall not find it in the field."

That is, He said this on the seventh day in the morning, and bid them eat of it whether baked or seethed, or as it was, or just as they pleased; however, they had liberty to eat of it, and indeed they had no other, because none fell on this day.

"For today is a sabbath unto the LORD":

A time of rest from labor, and to be employed in the service of the LORD.

"Today ye shall not find it in the field":

Should they seek for it, which they had no occasion to do, since there was a sufficiency provided the day before; and this he said to prevent their going out to seek for it, which, if out of curiosity or for any other reason any of them should do, it would be in vain and fruitless.

This is what you might call a forced rest.

Our bodies will quickly wear out, if there is not one day of rest in seven days.

It is very strange the three religions in the world that worship one God all have one day in seven that they rest.

The Moslems rest on Friday, the Jewish people practice Sabbath on Saturday, and the Christians practice Firstfruits on Sunday.

I just thought this was interesting.

Exodus 16:26 "Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, [which is] the sabbath, in it there shall be none."

Day after day, every morning, as they had done the six days past, so they should during their stay in the wilderness.

"But on the seventh day, which is the sabbath":

Which is repeated, being a new thing, to impress it on their minds.

"In it there shall be none":

No manna; none shall fall, and so none can be gathered, and therefore it would be to no purpose to go out and seek for it; as also there would be no need of it, since they would always have a double portion on the sixth day.

This was a command of God, and was not to be broken.

Exodus 16:27 "And it came to pass, [that] there went out [some] of the people on the seventh day for to gather, and they found none."

This was an act of willful disobedience.

It is remarkable, being the first violation of the express command, that it was not visited by a signal chastisement.

The rest and peace of the "holy Sabbath" were not disturbed by a manifestation of wrath.

This was not only for them, but us, as well.

If we do not take one day a week, and set it aside for rest and worship, it displeases God.

Just as these people did not profit from their work on the Sabbath, neither will we profit from seven days of work, instead of six.

God demands one day of rest.

That is the way He has made our bodies, and that is the only way they will function properly.

Exodus 16:28 "And the LORD said unto Moses, How long refuse ye to keep my commandments and my laws?"

The people had already broken one of the positive precepts with respect to the manna (see Exodus 16:20); now they broke another.

In the spirit, at any rate, since they would have gathered had they found anything to gather.

Thus they provoked God a second time; yet was He "so merciful, that He destroyed them not," but "turned His anger away, and did not stir up all His wrath" (Psalm 78:38).

Apparently, He made allowance for the ordinance being a new one, to which they were not yet accustomed.

This is interesting, that God said Moses was not keeping the Commandments.

The shepherd is responsible for his sheep.

Moses needed to make it even clearer to them the warnings from God.

I believe the message in this lesson, for us, is that the shepherd must be a watchman.

An evangelist is not the shepherd.

The evangelist brings a salvation message only, and the pastor is the shepherd.

The pastor not only preaches the redemption sermon, but must preach telling the members of his particular church how to live in the salvation that they received.

Most preachers today preach what their congregation wants to hear, instead of preaching what God would have them preach to help their members stay right with God.

Pastors are responsible for their flock.

Pastors are shepherds who take care of the sheep; feed them the pure Word, lead them to drink pure water, nudge them back into the fold when they stray and keep the wolves (devil) away.

This was the very reason God said this to Moses.

Moses had to teach his people the ways of God.

The shepherd (pastor), must teach the sheep the ways of God.

Exodus 16:29 "See, for that the LORD hath given you the sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day."

Hath granted to you and your fathers the great privilege of it; and has given the command to observe it.

"Let no man go out of his place":

Out of his house or tent into the field to gather manna, as appears from the occasion and reason of the precept here before mentioned.

For otherwise, they might and ought to go out of their houses to the public assemblies, (Lev. 23:3; Acts 15:21); and to lead their cattle to watering, or to help them out of a pit (Luke 13:15); and a sabbath day's journey was permitted (Acts 1:12).

This Sabbath of rest was for mankind; this double portion of food on the sixth day was so they would not have to do any work on the seventh.

This was to help man.

Exodus 16:30 "So the people rested on the seventh day."

Did not attempt to go out of their tents in quest of manna, as on other days, and observed it as a day of rest from labor.

And so they continued to do in successive generations.

Exodus 16:31 "And the house of Israel called the name thereof Manna: and it [was] like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it [was] like wafers [made] with honey."

"Manna":

The arrival of the quails in much quantity (verse 13), was totally overshadowed by the arrival of manna the next morning.

Despite the different descriptions given for its form and taste (verses 14, 31), the name chosen for it derived from the question they asked.

“Manna” was an older form of their questions, “What is it?”

The psalmist referred to manna as the “food from heaven” and “bread of angels” which rained down after God had opened the windows of heaven (Psalm 78:23-25).

Natural explanations for the manna, such as lichen growing on rocks or insect-excreted granules on tamarisk thickets, are totally inadequate to explain its presence in sufficient quantity on the ground under the dew every day except the Sabbath for the next 40 years (verse 35), to satisfy every family’s hunger.

It was supernaturally produced and supernaturally sustained to last for the Sabbath!

God had promised them milk and honey. This wafer bread tasted like honey.

Verses 32-36

“Lay it up before the LORD”:

Provision was made for memorializing the giving of the manna.

When the tabernacle was finally constructed, the pot of manna was placed inside the ark.

Succeeding generations would be reminded, when they came for worship, of the faithfulness of the Lord in caring for His people (Heb. 9:4).

Exodus 16:32 "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."

An omer is slightly more than two quarts.

This miracle Bread kept in the pot would never spoil.

The Bread is symbolic of Jesus.

They were never to forget their source of life.

Exodus 16:33 "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."

Compare (Exodus 16:34), where Aaron is said to have “laid it up before the Testimony,” i.e., the Two Tablets.

According to the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews, the ark of the Covenant contained three things only; the tablets, the pot of manna, and Aaron’s rod that budded (Heb. 9:4).

The deposit of the manna in so sacred a place may be accounted for by its typifying “the true bread from heaven” (John 6:32).

We just see the chain of command from God, to Moses, to Aaron.

Exodus 16:34 "As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept."

The word “Testimony” more likely means “covenant” or “covenant stipulations.”

It is virtually a synonym for the word normally translated “covenant,” as indicated by its use in naming the ark “the ark of the testimony” (in Exodus 25:22), but “the ark of the covenant” (in Numbers 10:33).

We just see, here, that Aaron was the actual one to put up the Manna.

The "Testimony", here, was the tablets with the Ten Commandments on it.

Aaron put this Manna in a pot to be kept, until the ark of the Covenant was built to house it in.

At a later time, this Manna, Aaron's rod that bloomed, and the Ten Commandments would all be kept in the ark of the Covenant.

Exodus 16:35 "And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years, until they came to a land inhabited; they did eat manna, until they came unto the borders of the land of Canaan."

Although the manna tasted sweet on their tongues (“like wafers made with honey; verse 31), its true sweetness was in its sufficiency to sustain the people from the land of slavery to the Land of Promise.

God’s provisions are sweet for those who are willing to “taste and see that the LORD is good” (Psalm 34:8).

"Forty":

As we spoke of before, means time of testing.

God let them wander forty years to compensate for forty days of unbelief, when they feared to take the Promised Land.

We will go into this further in another lesson.

Exodus 16:36 "Now an omer [is] the tenth [part] of an ephah."

The “omer” and the “Ephah” were both of them Egyptian measures.

One, the latter, continued in use among the Hebrews, at any rate, until the captivity (see Ezekiel 45, 46).

The other, the omer, fell out of use very early.

Hence this parenthetical verse; which is exegetical of the word “omer”.

And this may have been added by the completer of Deuteronomy, or by some later editor, perhaps Ezra.

That is just to explain that an omer is 5.1 pints.

Exodus Chapter 16 Continued Questions

1. Who first called this Bread Manna?
2. What did Moses call it?
3. What does "Manna" mean?
4. What amount was to be gathered for each person each day?
5. How much is an "omer"?
6. What does "mete" mean?
7. "And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the _____."
8. What was God teaching them in this?
9. When they didn't listen, and left some until the morning, what happened?
10. In what one word can you find most of the world's problems today?
11. Why should we not claim something that we have not worked for, that belongs to someone else?

12. What happened to the Manna that was not gathered?
13. What was different about the gathering on the sixth day?
14. What holy day was instituted in this?
15. How were the children to prepare the Manna for the seventh day?
16. Who did God institute the Sabbath for?
17. The Hebrew Sabbath lasted from _____ to _____.
18. The Sabbath could be a _____, a _____, or a _____ period.
19. God promises to supply our _____ not our _____.
20. What two things was God trying to teach in this?
21. Very similar to Sabbath, what do the Christians celebrate?
22. When some of the people disobeyed God, and went to gather on the Sabbath, who did God blame?
23. Explain the difference between an evangelist and a pastor.
24. What are most pastors preaching today?
25. Moses, like pastors, must teach his people the _____ .
26. What color was the Manna?
27. What did it taste like?
28. What was Aaron to do with one omer of Manna?
29. After the Ark of the Covenant was built, what three things will be in it?
30. How long did they eat Manna?
31. What was the "Testimony"?
32. Compare an omer to an ephah.