

# Manna

Exodus 16:31-36, "And the house of Israel called its name Manna. And it was like white coriander seed, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey. Then Moses said, "This is the thing which the Lord has commanded: 'Fill an omer with it, to be kept for your generations, that they may see the bread with which I fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you out of the land of Egypt.' " And Moses said to Aaron, "Take a pot and put an omer of manna in it, and lay it up before the Lord, to be kept for your generations." As the Lord commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept. And the children of Israel ate manna forty years, until they came to an inhabited land; they ate manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan. Now an omer is one-tenth of an ephah."

Let us pray. Dear God, I thank You for this passage this morning. Open our eyes to what You have for us today. Help us to understand the lessons You have. Let us trust in You for our provision as the children of Israel had to. I pray that You will help my dad be filled with Your Spirit, that He may speak the words of life. I pray that You would help us all have attentive ears and attentive hearts. In Your name, amen.

So after giving an explanation of why God was sending manna to test whether the Israelites would obey God or not, they immediately failed to obey. They fail to obey by eating it all in one day and they keep it overnight and it stinks and is filled with worms. They fail to obey and even though they gathered twice as much the sixth day, they still go out the seventh day to look for it. We see that their hearts are turned towards disobedience, relying on themselves rather than resting on Christ and resting on God for their provision. This is really important for us to understand because this is largely where the church in America is, this is largely where the church of the world is. They profess to trust in Christ, they profess to trust in Christ's work on the cross, but the real test in whether you trust in Christ is not to say you trust in Christ. The real test of whether you trust in Christ is will you obey His commandments. The writer of Hebrews makes the same exact point about the word of God that God used in regards to the manna He gave for the Israelites as a test whether they would obey Him or not. Hebrews 4:10-13, "Let us therefore be diligent to enter that rest, lest anyone fall according to the same example of disobedience. For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we must give account." They were resting in Christ but they fell into the same example of disobedience. So he's making a parallel, they wouldn't obey and that's how you knew they were not resting in Christ, they were resting in their own labor so the writer of Hebrews goes, 'Don't be like them, God has given you His word to see if you will obey.' And your response to His word is how you decide, that is how you understand what the thoughts and intents of your heart is. It's not by saying you love Jesus, it's not by walking an aisle, it's not by praying a prayer. The way you are able to discern the

thoughts and intents of your heart is how you respond to the word of God. Do you respond like they responded, where God says, 'Look, I'm giving you everything you need, all you have to do is not keep it overnight.' And they immediately kept it overnight. God says He's given you everything you need to rest in Christ, I've finished all the work and I've given you My word and will you listen or not? He does the same thing to Christians that He did to Israelites and before we leave manna we should make sure we understand this. He does exactly the same thing for professing Christians today as He did for the Israelites. Will you follow their example of disobedience or will you obey? The way you tell is how you respond to the word of God for it is the one who discerns the thoughts and intents of your heart, not your professions, not going to church, not all these other things that we can do for all kinds of reasons, but how you respond to the word of God. Do you have a heart of obedience or do you have a heart of disobedience? God gave them rest from Egypt, from their work in Egypt and all they had to do was trust God for their provision. Before this in Hebrews 4 it talked about 'Today don't be like them in their rebellion.' They had received all their provision but they said that's not enough, we don't trust, we won't do what we're told, we won't go into the Promised Land, we won't go defeat the enemies that God promised they would defeat. It's still true today, if you have entered His rest you will obey His commands. If you're trusting in His provision, if you're trusting in Christ, you will obey His commands. That's how we're diligent to enter His rest, you read God's word and you obey it. Not by thinking somehow you can do some great work that will make you acceptable to God, that's not the point. The point is if we are trusting in God, that trust will manifest itself in how we respond to the word of God. Just like God gave them manna to see if they would obey or not, God gave us His word which is sharper than a two-edged sword to see if we would obey or not and that's how you can tell where you stand with God. As we see their test and as we move on from the manna, let's remember God gave us a very similar test, don't fall into their example of disobedience. Don't fall into their example of disobedience because those that fall into their example of disobedience are not resting in Christ any more than they were resting in God. It can seem like you have been delivered from so much sin but if you're not resting in God you will not enter heaven. So as Moses gives a summary of manna, in this passage let's remember the broader picture, the broader picture is God gave them all kinds of things to bless but He says if you're trusting in those you will obey My commandments. His commandments were commandments of love, His ways are ways of blessing just like the manna is a means of blessing. Every one of His commandments is about love, how to love God and how to love your neighbor. Every one of His commandments is a blessing, yet do we want them or do we want to be saved by our own works?

Verse 31, "And the house of Israel called its name Manna. And it was like white coriander seed, and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey." So this is the first time that Israel is referred to as the 'house of Israel'. The house of Jacob has been used quite frequently before this, but now all of a sudden Moses calls them the house of Israel. The house of Israel is used seven times more than the house of Jacob throughout the rest of Scripture. It is a very common term. Jacob, as we all know, means deceiver while Israel means the One who will rule as God or the one who prevails with God. This point, for something like a thousand years, they will be known as the people of God, the people who have the oracles of God, those with revelation. As

they receive the manna they are the people that are supposed to know, they are supposed to be the people that understand. They are the ones that prevailed with God. They are the ones that they were supposed to teach everyone to obey all that God had commanded. They were held accountable to it in the Old Testament, it's not just the church that had the duty of causing the gospel to go through the earth. They could have ruled like God would rule, which we know is according to His commandments, but instead they rebelled against God, instead they despised His law. So the house of Israel "called its name Manna." I find this very interesting. As you read through the Old Testament, and especially the Pentateuch, the writings of Moses, names are really important. Even like Jacob versus Israel, these are really important names, whether he is the one who grasps the heel of the deceiver or whether he prevails with God. When Israel names things, they name things to have a real meaning, to talk about what it really is. They name places based on what happened there, they name and rename people based on what they are like Abram becomes Abraham, Jacob becomes Israel. This is typical for Moses as well, what does he call his first son? He calls his first son Gershon, which means refugee, to remind Moses that he was a refugee in a foreign land when he was given a wife and child. So names are really important for Israel and it's not like it stopped there, up until Moses had a child. In the next chapter, Exodus 17:7, he called the name of the place Massa and Meriba because of the contention of the children of Israel and because they tempted the Lord saying, 'Is the Lord among us or not?' Massa means testing and Meribah means quarrel so they name the wilderness after what God did there. This is their pattern of naming, but now all of a sudden they have something in front of them and the name basically means, 'What?' Think about that. It's not something that means anything. Some people translate it as whatness, a noun form of the question what. You have a people that all the time throughout the record they consistently name things based on what they are. Think of what they could have named it, they could have named it mercy because it was the mercy of God. They're in the desert and dying. They say they are dying of hunger and God shows them mercy, but they don't call it mercy, they call it 'what?'. They could have called it bread from heaven, that's a good description for it, that's what Jesus Christ calls it, bread from heaven. That would have been a good name for it, but they call it 'what?'. God's provision would be another good name. There were lots of things they could have called it that would have had meaning because they knew what it was, they knew that this is how they would survive, this is God feeding them, this is God providing what they needed, but they don't give it any of those names, they give it literally 'what?'. So even in the naming of it we should recognize the naming of it is a tremendous testimony to their lack of faith. They're not saying this is the provision of God, they're not saying this is bread from heaven, they're not saying this is the mercy of God, they're saying, what's happening? They don't understand who God is. When Christ returns to His country where He grew up, after having done many great miracles in Matthew 13:54-55 it says, "When He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, "Where did this Man get this wisdom and these mighty works? Is this not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary? And His brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas?" They say, 'Who is this guy?' They were supposed to know. They were supposed to know that He was the long-awaited Messiah. He was the one who had a forerunner go before Him who was John the Baptist that had been promised that Elijah had promised before him like Elijah had come before Elisha. They were supposed to know, but instead they say, 'Who is this?', 'Who could this be?'. They knew who it was but

because of unbelief they couldn't accept it. They knew the bread from heaven was the provision of God but instead they just ask what it is. John the Baptist, even he was confused and sent his disciples saying, 'Are you the Messiah or should we expect another' and Jesus' response was, 'You should know who I am, you shouldn't just be saying "Who?"'. Matthew 11:4-6, "Jesus answered and said to them, "Go and tell John the things which you hear and see: The blind see and the lame walk; the lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear; the dead are raised up and the poor have the gospel preached to them. And blessed is he who is not offended because of Me.'" They go, 'who?' because they are offended by Christ. They go, 'what is this' because they don't want God, they don't want to know who God is. That's why they call it manna. They don't want to acknowledge that it's the bread from heaven, they don't want to acknowledge this is God's mercy that God is sovereign. They just want to say they don't know where it came from, who would have thought? It's important to remember that it's a testimony of their lack of faith, it's a testimony of them not trusting God. It's important to understand as we consider names, how important names are, how powerful they are. As we go forward through Exodus we're going to see them disobey and disobey and disobey, rebel and rebel and rebel. They refuse to believe that God will provide, but every day they are going out and basically they go, 'It's morning, the sun hasn't come out yet, we should go out and collect manna.' How different do you think it would be if they said, 'We have to go out and collect mercy this morning', 'we have to go out and collect bread from heaven this morning', 'we have to go out and collect God's provision'. Think about that, words and names really change your attitude towards something, which is why in marketing people spend a lot of time trying to figure out what is the right name, because names have real power. They called it 'what?'. If they would have called it something that reflected what it is, it would have had real power for the next forty years. He gave them a natural reminder that they were going to go collect God's provisions each morning. So they have real influence because it's what it's called and the term that's used and every time it gets used it's a reminder of what it is. All they said and were reminded of for forty years was that they didn't know what it was even though they knew what it was, even though they knew if it was a test of whether they would obey God and trust in Him. Then Moses continues and says, "And it was like white coriander seed." In different translations and commentators, they have different interpretations of this phrase, but the most common seems to be to read it literally that it's white like coriander seed. In Numbers 11:7, it splits the whiteness from the coriander seed when it says the manna was like coriander seed and the color was like the color of bdellium. So a lot of times coriander seed isn't all that white. Coriander seed by the way is the seed of cilantro. So it could be that their coriander seed was really white and ours has changed, it's been 3,500 years. If you see watermelons from four hundred years ago they are very different looking than our watermelon, things do change through microevolution so it could have been white and got changed over time. Also it's the same with the picture of bdellium, it now looks pretty dark and that's once it's completely dried out, but it's the resin that kind of changes color so some people describe it as a pearl color. When it says white like coriander seed or that its color was the color of bdellium, it's probably an off-white, an ivory color rather than being what we would consider perfectly white. Again, coriander comes from the same word as what Gad comes from. Genesis 30:11, "Then Leah said, "A troop comes!" So she called his name Gad." Gad literally means a troop and it's the same root word of whatever seed this is called coriander seed, which may not really be coriander seed because nobody kept the seed around and matched them. So when

they translate they're just making guesses, but coriander seed grows in little clusters on the plant and they're little round balls and they're pretty small, which matches the description in Exodus 16:14, "And when the layer of dew lifted, there, on the surface of the wilderness, was a small round substance, as fine as frost on the ground." So there's probably in a teaspoon, probably a hundred seeds or something. They're very small and round and coriander seeds are still small and round. Assuming that the seed size is correct, it would take a while to gather an omer per person when these little seeds are sitting there on the frost. "And the taste of it was like wafers made with honey." This again is a pretty significant statement. One reason is that it was sweetness. We're used to sweetness, we have sugar all over the place, but a lot of cultures and especially slaves, they didn't have sugar that often, they didn't have sweet things. In all likelihood they were gathering wild honey so they would have had that pretty rarely. So all of a sudden wafers like honey, this is more sweetness than they are used to. I think a more important aspect of it is that this is a reminder of the Promised Land, the promise of God that when He first began to speak to Moses in Exodus 3:8, "So I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up from that land to a good and large land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites." Every time they ate it and every time they tasted this taste of honey, they were to or should have remembered that this is the promise that God gave them, that He would take them to a land that was flowing with milk and honey. Again, we should parallel between them eating manna and us taking the Lord's Supper. Every time we take the Lord's Supper, it's this foretaste of heaven, it's to be this reminder that it's not about this life, it's not about this place, it's about where we are going. Every time they ate the manna they were to be reminded that it's about where we're going, we're going to the land flowing with milk and honey even as we wander in this wilderness. When they reach the edge of the Promised Land they aren't thinking or seeing this as a foretaste of God's provision, that it was God's work that was doing it, that it was bread from heaven. Instead they get there and they say there's no way that we can do this, even though they had received bread every day for like two years at that point. Their answer is that they can't do this and we can't conquer those people. We should remember that when we partake of the Lord's Supper, it's to remind us and bring us back to the thought that this is not about this life, it's about eternal life and it should be not just to prepare us for eternal life, but it should be to prepare us for this life and that we say as we examine ourselves what sins we need to turn from, as we have tests and trials that come up, the Lord's Supper should be a reminder so that we say in that day that we remember Jesus Christ was crucified so when the mistreat me, it's nothing like what they did to Christ so we can persevere through trials like it says in 1 Peter, because we remember and the Lord's Supper should be that reminder of the promises to come so we act differently now, but like they were to be promised of the land flowing with milk and honey so they would go in when God told them to go in.

Verses 32-34, "Then Moses said, "This is the thing which the Lord has commanded: 'Fill an omer with it, to be kept for your generations, that they may see the bread with which I fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you out of the land of Egypt.' "And Moses said to Aaron, "Take a pot and put an omer of manna in it, and lay it up before the Lord, to be kept for your

generations.” As the Lord commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept.” As far as I can tell, and again I’m not Hebrew scholar, the ‘Then’ isn’t really in the text. The KJV adds the word ‘and’ rather than ‘then’, but I don’t think it really has either of those words. I think this is probably Moses summarizing manna and finishing the discussion on manna, not saying this is the point in time when he said it because it really doesn’t make sense to say it at that point in time. We have no evidence that Moses had any idea they would be eating it for forty years at this point and time. He’s told that later. He doesn’t know about the testimony, he doesn’t know about the ark that it was put in as it says in Hebrews 9, where it’s set before the testimony. I think this is Moses and in writing the story he goes back and says that he will tell the epilogue of what happens with manna, I will tell you the rest of the information as he summarizes manna. “This is the thing which the Lord has commanded.” Whenever it was given, Moses relayed it to Aaron as a commandment from the Lord, which means it’s important. God did this multiple times in the Old Testament; tell them to do something so that future generations would remember it. Like carrying stones when they crossed the bottom of the Jordan River, each tribe was supposed to take a stone out of the bottom of the river so they could set it up as an altar and remember this was the God that could stop the river, the God that could make them go through on dry ground even though it’s in the middle of the flood season. God tells us to remember and He also says to do things to help you remember. So they were to “Fill an omer with it.” They were to take an omer of manna “to be kept for your generations”. Remember, before they kept it overnight and if it wasn’t the sixth night it would rot and stink badly. If it was the sixth day they were allowed to keep it one night, but the assumption was that if they tried to keep it to the first day of the next week it would stink and rot again. But now all of a sudden they are commanded to take an omer of this and keep it for multiple generations. They were a nation being sustained by God and they were to remember it was God who sustained them, God who established them as a nation made one pot of manna never rot and He can make every other one rot in eight hours. God is the One who is in sovereign control, not just generally, not just that He sets the laws in place and everything ticks according to them. He determines and decrees everything that happens to the detail that this pot will rot and this pot will not. “That they may see the bread.” This is an interesting statement that they can see the bread because it was their duty to keep it as a testimony for later generations but we know it was put in the ark next to the tablets and the ark was in the Holy of Holies. They would have seen the ark when it was traveling with the tabernacle, but once it goes into the temple they wouldn’t even see the ark, the only one that would be the high priest. It was very clear that the bread was in the ark like Noel read from Hebrews 9:3-4, “and behind the second veil, the part of the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of All, which had the golden censer and the ark of the covenant overlaid on all sides with gold, in which were the golden pot that had the manna, Aaron’s rod that budded, and the tablets of the covenant;” Certainly after Solomon they would never see it, so some argue that before the temple was built that they would move the ark around so it was with them when they went to war and the high priest would open it and show the things that were in it. I kind of find that hard to believe because the picture is that it’s in the Holy of Holies which is a picture of heaven because it’s these things that it says in Hebrews 9 that all these things are a picture of what’s in heaven, not what’s on earth. It was separate, it was where you couldn’t enter unless you were the high priest. It was the picture of where Christ could go as the High Priest that entered in through the veil because He took on flesh and was

perfect. We do know that the only time that I can find that it's recorded that they looked in it was in 1 Samuel 2:19 where the Philistines return the ark after it causes them all kinds of problems. They send it back and it goes to Bethshemesh. He killed fifty thousand people for looking at the ark so I'm not thinking they are normally saying to look at the pot of manna, look at the rod. Why then would God be so upset that they looked at what was supposed to be in the Holy of Holies? So when we see the words that they may see the bread, that word 'see' can also be to see. "See what I mean" doesn't actually mean that you see those words, it's that you get the concept, you can perceive. We save things that we don't physically see, but we save them because they're important. The best thing I can think of is my marriage certificate. I can't remember the last time I have seen it, may have been my wedding day. But yet, it's still important. I'm sure Kendra has it hidden somewhere, but we do this all the time and the preservation of it makes us remember the importance even if we don't see the thing that it is. Look at the national covenant, the Declaration of Independence where you have all the original signatures. People saw copies of it but they didn't see the original until not long ago when it came out of the national archives and they made it so you could see it because it was a very important document, it was the basis of our country. You didn't have to go show it to everyone, it was the preservation of it that showed people it was important. I think that's what is happening here, they are preserving it and they're told to preserve it so people would talk about it and would remember it's importance. They didn't need to see it to remember it's important. So they could see the bread "with which I fed you in the wilderness." God sustained them, He didn't need the world to sustain them and by putting the manna in the ark, they could remember that, they didn't actually have to see the bread. They could remember that this is how they were provided for and they kept that omer so they would remember this is how it worked so that they could remember that God is still the One who provides. "When I brought you out of the land of Egypt." When God redeems a people, when He purchased them out of slavery, He became responsible for them and the manna is a testimony that He did provide for them. It's a promise that He will provide for them by bringing them to the land of plenty, it's a promise that as they put the manna in the ark of the covenant, we should remember the same thing, that God redeems us from slavery and He doesn't redeem us from slavery so we can go starve in the wilderness. He redeems us from slavery so that we can serve Him and as our Master He is a good Master and He will provide for us. We don't need to chase the things of the world because God knows we need the things of the world, He knows we need food, He will provide those things. That's what they were supposed to remember with the manna that was in the ark and the testimony of the ark of the covenant. That's what we should remember when we see the ark of the covenant. God provided for the Israelites, how much more will He provide for His bride? God gave them food day by day, how much more will He provide for His beloved bride? Remember, these are the people He wanted to take out and kill in the wilderness like it says in Ezekiel 20. His bride is not like that and if this is what He does for people His wrath was upon, what will He do for us? The manna being in the ark as a testimony is a picture of heaven. How much more should we remember it and trust that God will provide for us? "And Moses said to Aaron." God said it to Moses, Moses says it to Aaron. I think this is likely that He did this after He brought the tablets down from Mount Sinai, after the ark of the covenant was made when they gathered the gold. We know from Hebrews 9 that it was in a gold pot, it wasn't in an earthen pot, it was a vessel made out of gold. He says, "Take a pot." That word translated 'pot' is only translated like that in one other place. Just like the word pot in

Hebrews 9, the manna only appears in one place and that's in Hebrews 9 and this only appears here. It's really interesting because the word translated 'pot' comes from 'thorn', it doesn't come from a pot meaning it's consumable, like potable. Here the pot really means thorn. Even the picture of Jesus Christ wearing the crown of thorns so that the bread of heaven comes down, God has even put that here, that this pot is not like what you think of like a bowl. This is probably like a vase where it's tall and slender. The word in the New Testament that's translated 'pot' actually means 'to stand' so it stands tall. That would match what it means here. It would have to be a pretty big vase because they were to "put an omer of manna in it" and an omer is something like three quarts. "And lay it up before the Lord." They were to lay it up before God, not before them. It would have been in the Holy of Holies under the Mercy Seat, next to the testimony of the tablets and the testimony of Aaron's rod which blossomed. The tabernacle and the temple are pictures of the heavenly temple and we'll be able to see the manna, be able to see these things that are the shadows and pictures after glorification. It's "to be kept for your generations." The word 'kept' means more than preserved. It's most frequently translated 'charge', a responsibility given to them, that they were charged to be guards of this. They had a responsibility for it, it was their charge to keep this for the generations to come so that future generations wouldn't wander from God, which is exactly what happens. Deuteronomy 32 talks about how they grow fat, they get full, and they forget who God is instead of remembering that their provision was from God even though they are in the land flowing with milk and honey. "As the Lord commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept." This reference to the testimony is clearly the Ten Commandments and the two tablets that are in the ark as well. This is the testimony, the witness. This has to do with the covenant they enter into in Deuteronomy 27:26, "'Cursed is the one who does not confirm all the words of this law by observing them.'" "And all the people shall say, 'Amen!'" This is the testimony that they entered into covenant with God. Then the other thing in the ark of the covenant is Aaron's rod. Remember all three of these are pictures of Christ. The manna represents Christ as the Prophet who comes down from heaven who is sent by God. Just like every prophet, their word comes down, but He came down in the flesh so the manna represents Christ as a Prophet. The law represents Christ giving the law because that's what king's do, they set the law in place. Aaron's rod is the high priest, it represents Christ as the Priest. They had these things in this ark so that they could remember this is who God is, He is the Prophet, the Priest, and King. He is the One that intercedes on our behalf so they were to lay these three things together in the ark and keep it for their generations so they could remember this is Christ. Yes, the manna points to Christ, but Christ was far greater than just the manna. So they were to lay it up to be kept so they would remember in the generations to come their responsibility to God.

Verses 35-36, "And the children of Israel ate manna forty years, until they came to an inhabited land; they ate manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan. Now an omer is one-tenth of an ephah." "And the children of Israel ate manna forty years." This is the first time that we find out, again I don't think Israel found out at this point, this is the first time that we find out that they wandered for forty years. They find out that they're going to wander for forty years, two years later when they rebel about going into the Promised Land. Numbers 14:34, "According to the number of the days in which you spied out the land, forty days, for each day you shall bear



your guilt one year, namely forty years, and you shall know My rejection.” So that’s about two years later. We know that they wandered in the desert for thirty-eight years after that so it’s very clear that at this point they didn’t know, but they find out after the spies go into the land and they refuse to obey. So this is Moses writing after the fact. He’s writing not things that they knew and discovered at that point in time, but things that they knew later. So they ate manna “until they came to an inhabited land.” They received this until the day they entered Canaan. According to Joshua 5, after crossing the Jordan they camped in the plains of Jericho and all the males born in the last forty years were circumcised. They circumcised when they first left and then they circumcised here. So for forty years they hadn’t been circumcised, but they circumcise when they go into the Promised Land as a picture of glorification, as a picture of this sign of sin being removed. They circumcise as the Lord said to Joshua in chapter 5, verse 9, “Then the Lord said to Joshua, “This day I have rolled away the reproach of Egypt from you.” Therefore the name of the place is called Gilgal to this day.” So this is the picture of having all our sin removed, corruption putting in incorruption. They celebrate that day with a passover feast and then the next day Joshua 5:12, “Then the manna ceased on the day after they had eaten the produce of the land; and the children of Israel no longer had manna, but they ate the food of the land of Canaan that year.” So it went from this month after them leaving Egypt, for thirty nine years and eleven months until they go into Canaan and they’re camped before Jericho and at that point they are eating the produce of the land and the manna stops. So “they ate manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan.” Understand this picture, you have the picture of being in Egypt and the delivery of Egypt and being baptized in the Red Sea. That’s the picture of justification. You have the picture of God sustaining us in this world, God is the One feeding us, He is the Bread of Heaven who continues to come down to His people so we continue to be sustained in this life and don’t get carried away by the things of this world because those who are saved rely on Christ rather than their own works. Then the day comes when we will be in heaven and we won’t be sustained the same way, we will be in the presence of God where there will be no sun or moon, God Himself will be our light. So this is the picture of the sustenance we have now until that day when we will be glorified. Let’s make sure you don’t forget the great mercy of God because this is a picture of the mercy of God and we receive the same spiritual mercy which is more important than the physical mercy. Day by day it is God who sustains us, it is God who preserves our faith, it is God who brings us along, it is God who sanctifies us, it’s the father with the small child that can never provide for himself. That’s the picture of manna and that’s how we need to think about Christ in this life. “Now an omer is one-tenth of an ephah.” Moses throws in this detail and he’s clearly writing so the generations to come will remember because they know what the size of an omer is, they’re gathering it everyday, they get the idea. But Moses is writing it to us. It says it’s one-tenth of an ephah. Generations to come would remember what an ephah is, it’s a measurement that was used as an offering in the temple. Even though it was actually an omer, that’s not how it was referred to such as in Leviticus 5:11, ““But if he is not able to bring two turtledoves or two young pigeons, then he who sinned shall bring for his offering one-tenth of an ephah of fine flour as a sin offering. He shall put no oil on it, nor shall he put frankincense on it, for it is a sin offering.” They were supposed to remember what an ephah was and they would continue to do this as they did their sacrifices. They would bring a tenth of an ephah so they would remember. This was commanded because their supposed to remember that an omer is a tenth of an ephah. So

what's an ephah? Most cultures has a dry measure and it almost always falls into the same range. It's kind of the range of what a man can carry comfortably. What do we sell things in? We sell them in fifty pound bags. A bushel weighs about fifty pounds. If you go to any culture, all cultures have some weight that's about fifty to seventy pounds so an omer is about that weight, it's what someone can carry comfortably. So that's what we should be thinking. When you think about an omer, it's dry measure, it's a measure of the grain. It's a tenth of a bushel roughly, so somewhere between five and seven pounds of grain. These common things that go throughout all societies because in the end the amount that you carry from a field is going to be about the same regardless of the society. That's what an ephah is.

#### Applications:

1. Remember the importance of names. Names get used frequently, it's good for you to make sure that your children remember why they're called the names that they are because it should be a way to instill something in them. You chose the name for a reason and it drives them in a direction. We should recognize that it really does drive people in a direction, you call someone by the same name every day for their whole life and it really has an impact on them. So as we think about names be really careful how you name your children. As a society we've gotten into all these really dumb names because as a society we think everything is frivolous and nothing matters. So you read the names that these famous people call their children and it's a testimony to their futility and their worthlessness. Make sure you don't name your children that way, you're going to call them that a lot of times and they should know what it means, or call them the real word. We tend to do that for girls and not for boys, but if you call a daughter Mercy and you call Mercy, every time you talk to her, think about how many times she hears about Mercy. That has a real influence. Faith has a real influence. So just remember how influential names are because we can name our children kind of like how the Israelites named manna, 'What?' It just leads to confusion rather than pointing a direction. Names can point in a direction, don't ignore the power of names. There's a reason why throughout the Pentateuch they were very careful about how they named things. Make sure you consider your names.
2. Use the reminders that God gives you. God has given us the Lord's Supper to remind us that it's not about this life. God has given us baptism to remember so that as we see somebody being baptized, you must be born again to enter the kingdom of God, you must be changed by God, it's not a work that you can do. God gives us the Sabbath so that we remember. God told them to put this sample of manna away that they remembered and we're supposed to do the same thing. We're supposed to have these things that constantly remind us. The Sabbath is to remind us week by week that we're not saved by our week, but the finished work of Jesus Christ. Use reminders. Put things in place that help you remember what God did, how God cared for you, how God preserved you. They were supposed to remember this so they could tell the generations to come, make sure you remember what God did for you so you can tell the generations to come. Remember the Lord's Supper, God gave us the Lord's Supper and the Sabbath

day so that we could remember it's about eternal life, it's not about life on this planet. If it was about life on this planet we should work seven days because then we will have more stuff and we can do a better job of eat, drink, and be merry. God says rest on the seventh day because it's a testimony that you're resting in God and it's His work and not your work. Let's make sure that as we do that we remember the Sabbath day is not just about saying 'I'm not going to work', it's about speaking His words, thinking His thoughts, turning our foot from our own pleasure. It's about gathering together as a people to exhort one another to love and good works. That's the purpose of gathering together. Let's make sure as we use these things to remind ourselves that it's about eternity and not this life, that we use them in the ways that we're supposed to use them.

3. What's your attitude towards obedience to the word of God? It's the discernment of the thoughts and intents of the heart, it teaches you and tells you and shows you whether your desire is actually to obey God or not. Hey, I've had enough conversations with people about the Sabbath day and about whether we should still be keeping the Sabbath, to recognize this still really works. The people who don't want to keep the Sabbath, they don't want to obey God in any way. It's not just the Sabbath, they hate that God has the right to tell them what to do. It shows their heart. Make sure as you look at these things, make sure as you read the Scriptures and you hear something that you say is so contrary to the world, is your desire to do it or is your desire to disobey? Because it tells you where your heart is towards God.
4. What ebenezer's do you have? 1 Samuel 7:12, "Then Samuel took a stone and set it up between Mizpah and Shen, and called its name Ebenezer, saying, "Thus far the Lord has helped us."" An ebenezer literally means a stone of help. Our opening song was about ebenezers. What ebenezer's do you have? Do you have things that mark the fact that God has helped you? Do you have things that mark the fact that you may never even look at, but by saving them you remember what God did? By having them there you remember what God did. We should have ebenezer's. Prayer journals can be ebenezer's so you can see how God answered prayer so it's an encouragement to pray in the future, where you see how God has answered them in the past. Pictures can be ebenezer's, stones can be ebenezer's, but we're a people that are very forgetful so God told them to have things that remind them, God put in practice in our religious practice things to help us remember as a people and be reminded as a people that our rest is in Christ and not in our own works. You should have ebenezer's yourself to see how God worked in your life, that you can speak to your children and say God is real because He actually worked and this is what He did. Ebenezer's are a useful tool. The Passover was an ebenezer to cause the children to ask why they did things, why they laid down when they ate.
5. Do you remember that God is the one who provides? They were to store some of the manna to remember it was God who provided. Do you remember it's God who provides? He's the one who provided your salvation, He's the one that sustains your salvation, He's the one who in the end will remove all corruption from you. It's really easy to see if you believe God provides because Jesus Christ said to seek first the kingdom of God and all His righteousness and all these things will be added unto you. If you believe that

He is the one who provides, you will seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, it's really simple. If you don't believe that He will provide, you will chase other things thinking that's the way you will get your provision, you don't get your provision by God's way, you get your provision by my strength, by my wisdom, by my labor. Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you. Do you believe that God provides?

6. Remember that manna is a picture of Christ, it's a picture that just as they needed to gather their bread day by day, we need to gather our bread from heaven day by day. God has given us His word. It's not that we read through the Bible once and we're done, we never have to read it again. No, they had to go out and gather every day, that's the picture of manna, they had to gather it every day. Are you being faithful to gather the much greater bread? The word that proceeds from the mouth of God that gives eternal life and doesn't just sustain you for a day? These rebellious people, they were smart enough to go out day by day and pick up the manna to sustain them just until the next day. How much more should we be a people that want the bread of life, that want the word that proceeds from the mouth of God because it will sustain us to eternal life and not just temporary life.
7. Remember He's doing this to a rebellious people who His wrath is upon, a people that He's going to kill everybody over the age of eighteen at this point because it's two years later. He's going to kill every one of them and His wrath is upon every one of them except for two. Yet look at the mercy He shows to His enemies. Trust that He shows far greater mercy to His bride. Trust that He shows far greater mercy to the one He loves, the one He sacrificed Himself for, the one He set His love upon. Trust if you believe in Him, His provision for you is far better than the provision of the Israelites who He is just going to let their carcasses rot in the wilderness. As we think of this passage and think of the manna, think of the much better manna that we've been given and the much greater promises.

Let me close us in prayer. Oh Lord God we do thank You for Your word. We thank You that You are a God who does teach us what these things are, You give us these pictures and You explain them to us. We thank You that You are a merciful God, that You have given us Your word which proceeds from Your mouth so that we can know You, so that we can know how to seek You, so we can even know our own hearts. Lord, we thank You for Your great mercy towards us. We pray that You make us a more zealous people to obey You, a more zealous people to see the goodness of Your ways, of the mercy of Your ways, of the love that embodies Your ways, of your kindness towards us which is testified to by the ways that You have put before us that we are to obey. Lord, we thank You for Your great mercy and lovingkindness. We thank You for this picture of manna, may we rejoice in the greater manna that is still coming down from heaven now. In Jesus Christ's name we pray, amen.