

Exodus
June 10, 2007
Chapter 16

I. Rebellion #3

Ex 16:1-3

16:1 The whole Israelite community set out from Elim and came to the Desert of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had come out of Egypt. **2** In the desert the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. **3** The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the LORD's hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death." NIV

Verse 1 The Israelites were probably following an old road running parallel to the Red Sea. The Egyptians used this road to get to mining areas in January through March. Since it was now April or later, the Egyptians or anyone else would not have been using the road.

Verse 2 Why do they blame Moses and Aaron rather than the LORD?

Verse 3 Last time, it was water, and now it is food.

Verse 3 We always seem to remember the past more fondly than it was. As slaves, it is highly doubtful that they sat around pots of meat and ate all the food that they wanted.

II. Answers from the Top

Ex 16:4-8

4 Then the LORD said to Moses, "I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions. **5** On the sixth day they are to prepare what they bring in, and that is to be twice as much as they gather on the other days."

6 So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, "In the evening you will know that it was the LORD who brought you out of Egypt, **7** and in the morning you will see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your grumbling against him. Who are we, that you should grumble against us?" **8** Moses also said, "You will know that it was the LORD when he gives you meat to eat in the evening and all the bread you want in the morning, because he has heard your grumbling against him. Who are we? You are not grumbling against us, but against the LORD." NIV

Verse 4 The bread would be a test. The LORD gave them rules for using the bread. We will see how well that they follow them.

III. Grumble and You Shall Receive

Ex 16:9-12

9 Then Moses told Aaron, "Say to the entire Israelite community, 'Come before the LORD, for he has heard your grumbling.'"

10 While Aaron was speaking to the whole Israelite community, they looked toward the desert, and there was the glory of the LORD appearing in the cloud.

11 The LORD said to Moses, 12 "I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites. Tell them, 'At twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God.'" NIV

Verse 9 Does God reward grumbling? Is it ever acceptable for a Christian to complain?

Verse 12 In the desert, God is testing the people to get them to understand that they can trust. It would take 40 years. Was God willing to feed them?

IV. Song of Moses, Stanza 3

Ex 16:13-15a

13 That evening quail came and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. 14 When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor. 15 When the Israelites saw it, they said to each other, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. NIV

Verse 13 The quail appears to answer their grumbling. By providing it, God emphasizes that He can be trusted. The regular system of daily manna, with a skip day every seven, is a way to continue emphasizing this. The manna does not begin until the next day; the quail were an evening snack.

Verse 15 Many try to explain the miraculous manna by explaining it with regular means. The dew does not create the manna. When the dew is gone, the manna becomes visible. The manna comes during the night as does the dew, and is hidden initially by the dew.

Num 11:7-9

7 Now the manna was like coriander seed, and its appearance like that of bdellium. 8 The people would go about and gather it and grind it between two millstones or beat it in the mortar, and boil it in the pot and make cakes with it; and its taste was as the taste of cakes baked with oil. 9 When the dew fell on the camp at night, the manna would fall with it.

NASU

Verse 15 "Manna" literally mean "whatness" or "what is it?" It is almost funny reading accounts of people trying to analyze the manna to determine what it is or how it was made. We might as well today simply ask, "What is it?" The name is clearly a divine joke!

Verse 15 Also in the Egyptian tongue of the time there was apparently a word much like manna (mannu) that would translate to food (per Davis).

V. Enough is Enough

Ex 16:15b-20

Moses said to them, "It is the bread the LORD has given you to eat. 16 This is what the LORD has commanded: 'Each one is to gather as much as he needs. Take an omer for each person you have in your tent.'"

17 The Israelites did as they were told; some gathered much, some little. 18 And when they measured it by the omer, he who gathered much did not have too much, and he who gathered little did not have too little. Each one gathered as much as he needed.

19 Then Moses said to them, "No one is to keep any of it until morning."

20 However, some of them paid no attention to Moses; they kept part of it until morning, but it was full of maggots and began to smell. So Moses was angry with them. NIV

Verse 16 The Israelites can take as much as they need. The need is established by God as being about an omer, or more than two quarts.

Verse 17 For the most part, the Israelites followed the rule.

Verse 18 Apparently, if someone gathered more than their allotted amount, they shared it with someone who did not gather enough (see 2 Cor. 8:15).

Verse 20 Some did not keep the rule. If they did not follow the rule and gathered too much, they got an unpleasant surprise.

VI. Get It When It is Ready

Ex 16:21-32

21 Each morning everyone gathered as much as he needed, and when the sun grew hot, it melted away. 22 On the sixth day, they gathered twice as much — two omers for each person — and the leaders of the community came and reported this to Moses. 23 He said to them, "This is what the LORD commanded: 'Tomorrow is to be a day of rest, a holy Sabbath to the LORD. So bake what you want to bake and boil what you want to boil. Save whatever is left and keep it until morning.'"

24 So they saved it until morning, as Moses commanded, and it did not stink or get maggots in it. 25 "Eat it today," Moses said, "because today is a Sabbath to the LORD. You will not find any of it on the ground today. 26 Six days you are to gather it, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will not be any."

27 Nevertheless, some of the people went out on the seventh day to gather it, but they found none. 28 Then the LORD said to Moses, "How long will you refuse to keep my commands and my instructions? 29 Bear in mind that the LORD has given you the Sabbath; that is why on the sixth day he gives you bread for two days. Everyone is to stay where he is on the seventh day; no one is to go out." 30 So the people rested on the seventh day.

31 The people of Israel called the bread manna. It was white like coriander seed and tasted like wafers made with honey. 32 Moses said, "This is what the LORD has commanded: 'Take an omer of manna and keep it for the generations to come, so they can see the bread I gave you to eat in the desert when I brought you out of Egypt.'" NIV

Verse 21 Obviously a lazy person might go hungry still, if they did not get out there and gather it in the morning.

- Verse 23 This is the first mention of the Sabbath in Scripture.
- Verse 24 Miraculously the manna did not decay on the seventh day. This is a great reminder that it was God's miracle. It also reminds the people to keep the Sabbath.
- Verse 30 Basically, there was nothing for the people to do on the Sabbath. They did not travel; they did not need to gather food...indeed, could not gather it.
- Verse 31 Without refined sugar, honey was the pinnacle of sweeteners in ancient times.

VII. A Miracle Forever

Ex 16:33-36

33 So Moses said to Aaron, "Take a jar and put an omer of manna in it. Then place it before the LORD to be kept for the generations to come."

34 As the LORD commanded Moses, Aaron put the manna in front of the Testimony, that it might be kept. 35 The Israelites ate manna forty years, until they came to a land that was settled; they ate manna until they reached the border of Canaan.

36(An omer is one tenth of an ephah.) NIV

- Verse 34 If we need to associate any more miracles with the manna, we have it apparently preserved for over a thousand years in the ark:

Heb 9:3-4

3 Behind the second curtain was a room called the Most Holy Place, 4 which had the golden altar of incense and the gold-covered ark of the covenant. This ark contained the gold jar of manna, Aaron's staff that had budded, and the stone tablets of the covenant. NIV

- Verse 35 Which miracle was greater, parting the Red Sea or sending manna from heaven to feed two million people for 40 years?

- Verse 36 An ephah is approximately the same size as a bushel.

VIII. Bread of Life

John 6:30-33

31 Our forefathers ate the manna in the desert; as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'"

32 Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. 33 For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

NIV

What does the bread of life mean to you? How does it affect your life daily?

How are you trusting Jesus? In what areas, could you trust Him more? Where do you not trust Him? In what ways might you help yourself to trust Him more?