


# END-TIMES ISSUES



#80

Commandment #4 –  
Learning from Manna (Part 4).

GOD DOESN'T TELL US TO  
KNOW ALL THE END-TIME DETAILS.  
HE TELLS US TO BE READY.

A  
N  
D  
  
B  
E  
Y  
O  
N  
D  
I

1

THE "MANNA EVENT," AND ALL IT IMPLIES, ISN'T JUST FOR ISRAEL.  
★ IT'S FOR US! ★

It's not that we *experience* what they experienced.  
Rather, we are *taught about the event* and its significance,  
in both Old and New Testaments,  
*and we have an OBLIGATION to respond appropriately to it.*

Even the "peripheral" events that occurred with it have a significance that we *need* to pay attention to!

REGARDING ALL THEIR COMPLAINING AND SIN:

Now these things happened to them as **examples** and were written down as **warnings** for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come.  
  
 1 Corinthians 10:11 (BSB); context: vs. 1-13; manna is referred to in v. 3, and complaining related to manna in v. 9.

2

All these "manna event" activities were intended to teach us (directly or indirectly) about our *need for God*.  
*This is the basic "Fourth Commandment principle."*

- **ABOUT THE TEN COMMANDMENTS:** We need to remember that they represent *categories* of commands, instructions and examples that teach us about God, his nature and his will for people (who were created as the "image-bearers" of the Living God – Genesis 1:26-27).
- **THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT:** This commandment tells us that we need to set aside time to redirect our focus: ① *from* our daily activities, and ② *to* the God who created us, and on whom we are totally dependent for all we are, have and do.
- **APPLYING THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT:** We could express this command by the statement: "*I need God*." Implied in this statement is the need to *trust* God, to *rely* on him in our daily activities, to *do whatever is necessary* to fulfil this need (which includes a focus on God's Word, prayer, etc.), and much more. We can also include *celebration* of this God, who we are totally dependent on.

3

WHAT DOES THE "MANNA EVENT" TEACH US?

- 1. EVEN THE COMPLAINING THAT TOOK PLACE POINTS (INDIRECTLY) TO THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT PRINCIPLE.**
  - This complaining was an expression of *distrust* in God and his ability to do what he had promised. It can be expressed in a variety of ways, such as:
    - ✓ "We can't trust you, and we can't rely on you to provide for our needs."
    - ✓ "We don't need *you*; we need something *more reliable* to provide for us!"
    - ✓ "Your provisions are totally inadequate."
  - We've looked at this issue in the past. This complaining illustrates the *opposite* of the Fourth Commandment principle.
  - In the New Testament, we are told to *learn* from their bad example... and *do the opposite* (1 Corinthians 10:1-11+).

4

- This complaining wasn't an isolated act... it was an *ongoing way of life!*

[God] endured their conduct **for about forty years** in the wilderness.  
 Acts 13:18 (BSB)

---

- Here are some New Testament passages that focus on the "positive" response to this sinful conduct. These passages are based on the concept of "contentment," and illustrate a *trust* in God that has been *applied to life* (or that *should be applied*).
  - ✓ Be content with your income – Luke 3:14.
  - ✓ Pursue godliness with contentment, rather than riches; be content, free from the love of money – 1 Timothy 6:6-10; Hebrews 13:5.
  - ✓ Be content in *all circumstances* – Philippians 4:11-13. (God gives his people strength to do so.)

5

- 2. THE FACT THAT WE CAN TRUST GOD TO PROVIDE FOR OUR NEEDS.**
  - God *did* provide, even though many of the Israelites had claimed that he *wouldn't* or *couldn't* do so.
  - Two of the goals of the "manna event" were: ① to teach the principle that God provides, and ② to point to our ultimate need to trust him in matters that go *beyond* merely physical food. (In these matters, he will *also* provide.)

... so that you might understand that man does not **live** on bread alone, but **on every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD**.  
 Deuteronomy 8:3b (BSB)

- This is why Jesus could resist the *temptation* to take matters into his own hands, when he was extremely hungry, and his willingness to rely *solely* on the Father was being tested. [See Matthew 4:4, quoted on the next page.]

6

- Here are some New Testament passages that focus on *trusting* God to provide for our needs:
  - ✓ The Lord's Prayer – "Give us today our daily bread" – Matthew 6:11.
  - ✓ Don't be worrying about food and clothes. Seek first God's kingdom and his righteousness, and he will take care of your needs – Matthew 6:25-34.
  - ✓ As Jesus reminds us, the primary emphasis of the "manna event" goes *beyond* temporary needs. We need to remember this, especially when we face temptation:

But Jesus answered, "It is written:  
 'Man shall not live on **bread** alone,  
 but on **every word that comes from the mouth of God.**'"  
 Matthew 4:4 (BSB); see also Luke 4:4.

- Even if our *temporary* needs don't seem to get met, and it seems that the *wicked* are the ones who prosper, we *still* have our *greatest* need fulfilled – Psalm 73:23-26. (Read the whole chapter.)

7

- Related to this is the issue of *sharing*. One of the ways that God takes care of his people is by means of his people, as they take care of each other *as a family*.

So the Israelites did this. Some gathered more, and some less.  
 When they measured it by the omer, **he who gathered much had no excess, and he who gathered little had no shortfall.**  
 Each one gathered as much as he needed to eat.

Exodus 16:17-18 (BSB)

At the present time, your surplus will meet their need, so that in turn their surplus will meet your need. Then there will be equality.

As it is written:  
**"He who gathered much had no excess,  
 and he who gathered little had no shortfall."**

2 Corinthians 8:14-15 (BSB)

[If people choose to disobey: God will judge both the lazy (those not willing to work), as well as the stingy (those not willing to help the truly needy).]

8

### 3. GOD'S GLORY (VISIBLY EXPRESSED) IS SEEN IN THE EVENT.

- God's glory is a common theme. The God we *need* revealed himself.
  - ✓ At the manna event, he revealed his glory, partly hidden in the cloud (so that the people wouldn't die). He revealed his glory (in a cloud or a pillar of fire) throughout their wilderness journey. Later, his *visible* glory resided in the tabernacle/temple (behind the curtain, in the Most Holy Place).
  - ✓ The prophet Ezekiel tells us that God's *visible* glory has left, and will not return until the nation repents. (This has not yet happened.)
- Jesus is the ultimate expression of God's glory – not just his *visible* glory (which we will someday see), but more importantly, his *nature* – his holiness, righteousness, moral qualities, etc.

The Son is **the radiance of God's glory** and the exact representation of His nature ...

Hebrews 1:3 (BSB)

9

### ★ THE MOST SIGNIFICANT ASPECT OF GOD'S GLORY. ★ (This aspect of his glory is *actively* expressed today.)

- The most significant aspect of God's glory involves *who he is* – his *nature*, not the *visible* expression of his glory. It's about God's *value* or *worth*, his *splendor*, his *reputation*, and even his *invisible presence* among his people.
- Our response is to "glorify" him, by recognizing him for who he is, by placing him at the center of our lives, by becoming more like him in our moral character, and by honoring him in all that we do.
- Though, at the present time, God's glory is not *visibly* present; God is *invisibly* present in and among his people – especially when they come together to worship and praise him, and to learn more about him. (These activities are part of a Fourth Commandment focus.)
- Someday, we will *see* Jesus in all his *visible* glory. But while looking forward to the *future*, we are to live *today* in a way that shows the world what his glory (value, worth, etc.) is like.

10

- Here are some New Testament passages that focus on God's *invisible* presence among us. Read the context of these passages to see how this fact is to influence the way we live – so that we *glorify* (rather than dishonor) God.

- ✓ Jesus is present – Matthew 18:20; 28:20.
- ✓ The **Holy Spirit** is present – 1 Corinthians 3:16 (as a group) and 6:19 (as individuals – and this fact requires that we *honor* God, see v. 20). Also, John 14:16-17.
- ✓ In general, **God** is present – 2 Corinthians 6:16 (so we must *reject* the ways of the world, see vs. 6:14-7:1).

- We are to glorify/honor God in all that we do – 1 Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 3:17.



- All people will someday see Jesus' *visible* glory. For some, it will be a time of terrifying judgment; but for God's people, it will be an eternal joy – Matthew 24:30; Revelation 1:7; John 17:24.

11

### 4. GOD USED THE "MANNA EVENT" TO TEACH PEOPLE ABOUT THE SABBATH. Later, when God introduced the Fourth Commandment, the people *already* understood the basic concept.

- God gave them specific instructions to follow, so they could learn that his instructions are *trustworthy* and need to be *obeyed*.

Then the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain down bread from heaven for you. Each day the people are to go out and gather enough for that day. In this way **I will test whether or not they will follow My instructions.** Then on the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather on the other days."

Exodus 16:4-5 (BSB)

God did exactly what he said he would do. He would send "bread from heaven" (manna) for 6 days, then none for 1 day. (Even *heaven* would rest from work on the seventh day!)

12

- God connected his instructions to the Sabbath concept. Gathering the manna (6 days) and not gathering it (1 day) would teach them about the Sabbath.

[Moses] told them, "This is what the LORD has said: 'Tomorrow is to be a **day of complete rest, a holy Sabbath to the LORD**. So bake what you want to bake, and boil what you want to boil. Then set aside whatever remains and keep it until morning.' "

[In the morning...]"Eat it today," Moses said, "because today is a **Sabbath to the LORD**. Today you will not find anything in the field. For six days you may gather, but on **the seventh day, the Sabbath**, it will not be there."

Exodus 16:23, 25-26 (BSB)

As we have observed in the past, this concept of "Sabbath rest" does not mean passive inactivity. The Sabbath is "to the Lord" – dedicated to him, or done in his honor. It is not "dedicated to sleeping and ignoring the Lord"!

13

- God made it very clear that the Sabbath was a gift! It is *for our good*, because we *need* this change in focus.

"Understand that **the LORD has given you the Sabbath**; that is why on the sixth day He will give you bread for two days. On the seventh day, everyone must stay where he is; no one may leave his place."

So the people rested on the seventh day.

Exodus 16:29-30 (BSB)

- In the **New Testament**: Jesus tells us that God gave us the Sabbath, *not* because he (God) needed it, but because we (people) need it.

Then Jesus declared, "**The Sabbath was made for man**, not man for the Sabbath."

Mk 2:27 (BSB)

**Under the New Covenant**, there will be differences. But the basic principle remains the same: Take time away from everyday activities, to focus on God, the source of life and of all good things.

14

#### 5. THE "MANNA EVENT" WAS A SIGN THAT POINTED TO SOMETHING FAR GREATER THAN MERE FOOD. It points to...

- The fact that we need everything that comes from God! We've already seen that Moses and Jesus both emphasize this fact.

... He gave you manna to eat, ... so that you might understand that man does not live on bread alone, but on **every word that comes from the mouth of the LORD**.

Deuteronomy 8:3b (BSB); quoted by Jesus in Matthew 4:4 and Luke 4:4.

(Many passages have this emphasis, even though they don't mention manna.)

- The **ultimate fulfillment of this need** is Jesus Christ, who is described as the "bread of life," in John 6. He provides an *eternal* life that the manna in the wilderness could not provide.
  - Many things happen in this chapter, but we will point out two that mention Old Testament Scripture: ① The people use Scripture (wrongly) to express what they wanted *Jesus* to do; and ② Jesus used Scripture (rightly) to show them what *they* needed to do.

15

#### In the New Testament (John 6): Manna & learning from God.

- The people had seen Jesus perform many signs – healing people and miraculously feeding them. They surmised that he might be "the prophet" who would be as great as Moses (Deuteronomy 18:15, 18; 34:10).
- To test Jesus, they demanded that he perform another sign that would be comparable to the miracle of manna – a constant supply of food.

"What sign then will You perform... Our fathers ate the **manna** in the wilderness, as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.' "

John 6:30b, 31 (BSB)

- Jesus told them that this manna had only temporary value (the people still died), and that the sign ultimately pointed to him – the source of eternal life. *They needed to pay attention to Scripture – to learn from God. If they did this, they would look to Jesus for this life.* (They were unwilling to do so.)

"It is written in the Prophets: 'And they will all be **taught by God**.' Everyone who has heard the Father and learned from Him comes to Me ..."

John 6:31 (BSB); the same focus as Deuteronomy 8:3!

16

## Our Mission: LEARN & LIVE, based on what manna is intended to teach us!

Look beyond the *temporary*!  
*We need to pursue Jesus, and all that he provides!*  
(This is the ultimate focus of the Fourth Commandment!)

### One final MANNA reference in Scripture... a promise for the future.

He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.  
To the one who overcomes, I will give the hidden **manna**.

Revelation 2:17a (BSB)

There is no clear explanation of what this means. But we *do* know that, whatever it is, it will be wonderful. It is a gracious gift from God, to those who overcome the sins and temptations of this present world – to those who seek first his kingdom and his righteousness.

17

## Credits

### SCRIPTURES

- Scriptures marked "BSB" – Taken from The Holy Bible, Berean Standard Bible, BSB; Public Domain (CC BY NC ND). <https://bearsanbible.com/>

### PICTURES (original sources; modifications may have been made)

- Brick wall – GDJ / CC0; via [openclipart.org](https://openclipart.org/detail/227830/brick-texture): <https://openclipart.org/detail/227830/brick-texture>
- Globe with lit fuse – GDJ / CC0; via [openclipart.org](https://openclipart.org/detail/219655/political-map-earth-globe-bomb): <https://openclipart.org/detail/219655/political-map-earth-globe-bomb>
- Page divider – Flirkin / CC0; via [openclipart.org](https://openclipart.org/detail/291287/decorative-divider-244): <https://openclipart.org/detail/291287/decorative-divider-244>

Presentation – Dennis Hinks © 2025.

18