

# Exodus 16 - Quail and Manna in the Wilderness

I. Exodus from Egyptian bondage: Israel's redemption, liberation, and preservation (Ex 1:1—18:27)

(3) Preservation (Ex 15:22—18:27)

(B) Preserved from hunger through manna and quail in the journey from Elim in the wilderness of Sin (16:1-36)

## Exodus 16

(B) Preserved from hunger through manna and quail in the journey from Elim in the wilderness of Sin (16:1-36)

1 Then they set out from Elim, and all the congregation of the sons of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departure from the land of Egypt.

1 Then they set out from Elim, and all the congregation of the sons of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departure from the land of Egypt.

1 Later, they left Elim, and the whole congregation of the Israelites came to the desert of Sin, which lay between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departure from the land of Egypt.

1 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.

- 45 days since their departure from Egypt, on the road to Mount Sinai, God permitted and used yet another experience to teach the Israelites important lessons

2 But the whole congregation of the sons of Israel **grumbled** against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness.

2 The whole congregation of the sons of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness.

2 The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the desert.

2 And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness:

- "...grumbled" - this was Israel's third occasion of grumbling (Cf. 14:11-12; 15:24)  
— The reason this time was not fear of the Egyptian army (14:11-12) or lack of water (15:24), but lack of food

3 The sons of Israel said to them, "If only we had died by the LORD'S hand in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat, when we ate bread until we were full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this entire assembly with hunger!"

3 The sons of Israel said to them, "Would that we had died by the LORD's hand in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the pots of meat, when we ate bread to the full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

3 The Israelis told them, "If only we had died by the LORD's hand in the land of Egypt when we sat by the cooking pots, when we ate bread until we were filled—because you brought us to this desert to kill this entire congregation with hunger."

3 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.

4 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, so that I may **test** them, whether or not they will walk in My instruction.

4 Then the LORD said to Moses, "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may test them, whether or not they will walk in My instruction.

4 The LORD told Moses, "Listen very carefully! I'll cause food to rain down for you from heaven, and the people are to go out and gather each day's portion on that day. In this way I'll test them to demonstrate whether or not they'll live according to my instructions.

4 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.

- "...test" - to prove what they were, not to tempt them to sin (Cf. 15:25; 20:20)

- One manifestation of God's glory was His regular provision of manna, which began the next day and continued for 40 years

5 On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily."

5 On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily."

5 On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be double what they gather on other days."

5 And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare that which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.

6 So Moses and Aaron said to all the sons of Israel, "At evening you will know that the LORD has brought you out of the land of Egypt;

6 So Moses and Aaron said to all the sons of Israel, "At evening you will know that the LORD has brought you out of the land of Egypt;

6 So Moses and Aaron addressed the entire congregation of the Israelites: "This evening you will know that the LORD has brought you out of the land of Egypt,

6 And Moses and Aaron said unto all the children of Israel, At even, then ye shall know that the LORD hath brought you out from the land of Egypt:

7 and in the morning you will see **the glory of the LORD**, for He hears your grumblings against the LORD; and what are we, that you grumble against us?"

7 and in the morning you will see the glory of the LORD, for He hears your grumblings against the LORD; and what are we, that you grumble against us?"

7 and in the morning you will see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your complaints against him. After all, who are we that you complain against us?"

7 And in the morning, then ye shall see the glory of the LORD; for that he heareth your murmurings against the LORD: and what are we, that ye murmur against us?

- "...the glory of the LORD" - the evidence of God's presence in the cloud

8 And Moses said, "This will happen when the LORD gives you meat to eat in the evening, and bread to the full in the morning; for the LORD hears your grumblings which you grumble against Him. And what are we? Your grumblings are not against us but against the LORD."

8 Moses said, "*This will happen* when the LORD gives you meat to eat in the evening, and bread to the full in the morning; for the LORD hears your grumblings which you grumble against Him. And what are we? Your grumblings are not against us but against the LORD."

8 Moses also said, "When the LORD gives you meat to eat in the evening, and bread in the morning to satisfy you, the LORD will hear your complaints directed against him. Who are we? Your complaints aren't against us, but rather against the LORD."

8 And Moses said, This shall be, when the LORD shall give you in the evening flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full; for that the LORD heareth your murmurings which ye murmur against him: and what are we? your murmurings are not against us, but against the LORD.

**9** Then Moses said to Aaron, "Say to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, 'Come forward before the LORD, for He has heard your grumbings.'"

**9** Then Moses said to Aaron, "Say to all the congregation of the sons of Israel, 'Come near before the LORD, for He has heard your grumbings.'"

**9** Then Moses instructed Aaron, "Say to the whole congregation of the Israelis, 'Come near into the LORD's presence, because he has heard your complaints.'"

**9** And Moses spake unto Aaron, Say unto all the congregation of the children of Israel, Come near before the LORD: for he hath heard your murmurings.

**10** And it came about, as Aaron spoke to the entire congregation of the sons of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud.

**10** It came about as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the sons of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud.

**10** While Aaron was speaking to all the congregation of the Israelis, they turned toward the desert, and there the glory of the LORD was seen in the cloud.

**10** And it came to pass, as Aaron spake unto the whole congregation of the children of Israel, that they looked toward the wilderness, and, behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud.

**11** And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

**11** And the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,

**11** The LORD told Moses,

**11** And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying,

**12** "I have heard the grumbings of the sons of Israel; speak to them, saying, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread; and you shall know that I am the LORD your God.'"

**12** "I have heard the grumbings of the sons of Israel; speak to them, saying, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread; and you shall know that I am the LORD your God.'"

**12** "I've heard the complaints of the Israelis. Tell them, 'At twilight you are to eat meat and in the morning you are to be filled with bread, so you may know that I am the LORD your God.'"

**12** I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I am the LORD your God.

13 So it came about at evening that the quails came up and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp.

13 So it came about at evening that the quails came up and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp.

13 Later that evening quail came up and covered the camp, and then in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp.

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

14 When the layer of dew evaporated, behold, on the surface of the wilderness there was a fine flake-like thing, fine as the frost on the ground.

14 When the layer of dew evaporated, behold, on the surface of the wilderness there was a fine flake-like thing, fine as the frost on the ground.

14 When the layer of dew evaporated, on the surface of the desert a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost, appeared on the ground.

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

15 When the sons of Israel saw it, they said to one another, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, "It is the bread which the LORD has given you to eat.

15 When the sons of Israel saw *it*, they said to one another, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, "It is the bread which the LORD has given you to eat.

15 When the Israelis saw it, they asked one another, "What is it?", because they did not know what it was.

Moses told them, "It's the food that the LORD has given you to eat.

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.

16 This is what the LORD has commanded: 'Everyone gather as much as he will eat; you shall take an **omer** apiece according to the number of people each of you has in his tent.'

16 This is what the LORD has commanded, 'Gather of it every man as much as he should eat; you shall take an omer apiece according to the number of persons each of you has in his tent.'

16 This is what the LORD has commanded: 'You are to gather from it what each person is to eat, about one omer per person according to the number of your people, and one person is to gather for everyone in his tent.'

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.

- "...omer" - about two quarts dry measure

- An omer is 6 pints, multiplied by about 2 million people is about 9 million pounds, or 4500 tons a day; it equals about 1 million tons annually (for 40 years)!

— That is a lot of stuff to try to explain away scientifically...

17 The sons of Israel did so, and some gathered much and some little.

17 The sons of Israel did so, and *some* gathered much and *some* little.

17 The Israelis did this, some gathering much, some little.

**17** And the children of Israel did so, and gathered, some more, some less.

18 When they measured it by the omer, the one who had gathered much did not have too much, and the one who had gathered little did not have too little; everyone gathered as much as he would eat.

18 When they measured it with an omer, he who had gathered much had no excess, and he who had gathered little had no lack; every man gathered as much as he should eat.

18 When they measured it with a vessel the capacity of which was one omer, the one who gathered much did not have an excess, while the one who gathered little did not lack. They gathered exactly what each needed to eat.

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.

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

19 Moses said to them, "Let no man leave any of it until morning."

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

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

20 But they did not listen to Moses, and some left part of it until morning, and it bred worms and stank; and Moses was angry with them.

20 But they did not listen to Moses, and some left part of it until morning, and it bred worms and became foul; and Moses was angry with them.

20 But they did not listen to Moses—some people left part of it until morning, and it produced maggots and smelled bad, so Moses got angry at them.

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.

21 They gathered it morning by morning, everyone as much as he would eat; but when the sun became hot, it would melt.

21 They gathered it morning by morning, every man as much as he should eat; but when the sun grew hot, it would melt.

21 Every morning they gathered it, according to what each needed to eat; and when the sun became hot, it melted.

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

**22** Now on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for each one. When all the leaders of the congregation came and told Moses,

**22** Now on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for each one. When all the leaders of the congregation came and told Moses,

**22** On the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, about two omers per person. Then all the leaders of the congregation came and reported to Moses,

**22** 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.

23 then he said to them, "This is what the LORD meant: Tomorrow is a Sabbath observance, a holy Sabbath to the LORD. Bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over put aside to be kept until morning."

23 then he said to them, "This is what the LORD meant: Tomorrow is a sabbath observance, a holy sabbath to the LORD. Bake what you will bake and boil what you will boil, and all that is left over put aside to be kept until morning."

23 and he told them, "This is what the LORD said: 'Tomorrow is a Sabbath observance, a holy Sabbath to the LORD. Bake what you want to bake and boil what you want to boil, and put aside whatever remains to be kept for yourselves until morning.'"

23 And he said unto them, This is that which the LORD hath said, To morrow is the rest of the holy sabbath unto the LORD: bake that which ye will bake to day, and seethe that ye will seethe; and that which remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning.

- The Sabbath had not yet been instituted by God (Cf. Ex 20:8-11)

— As slaves in Egypt, the Israelites had probably worked seven days a week; God was blessing them with a day of rest, and was preparing them for the giving of the fourth commandment

24 So they put it aside until morning, as Moses had ordered, and it did not stink nor was there a maggot in it.

24 So they put it aside until morning, as Moses had ordered, and it did not become foul nor was there any worm in it.

24 So they put it away until morning, as Moses commanded, and it did not smell bad, and there were no maggots in it.

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

25 Then Moses said, "Eat it today, for today is a Sabbath to the LORD; today you will not find it in the field.

25 Moses said, "Eat it today, for today is a sabbath to the LORD; today you will not find it in the field.

25 Moses said, "Eat it today, since today is a Sabbath to the LORD, and today you won't find it in the field.

25 And Moses said, Eat that to day; for to day is a sabbath unto the LORD: to day ye shall not find it in the field.

26 Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there will be none."

26 Six days you shall gather it, but on the seventh day, *the* sabbath, there will be none."

26 For six days you are to gather it, but on the seventh day, the Sabbath, there won't be any."

26 Six days ye shall gather it; but on the seventh day, which is the sabbath, in it there shall be none.

**27** Yet it came about on the seventh day that some of the people went out to gather, but they found none.

**27** It came about on the seventh day that some of the people went out to gather, but they found none.

**27** Nevertheless, that seventh day some of the people went out to gather, but they did not find any.

**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.

28 Then the LORD said to Moses, "How long do you refuse to keep My commandments and My instructions?

28 Then the LORD said to Moses, "How long do you refuse to keep My commandments and My instructions?

28 Then the LORD asked Moses, "How long will you people refuse to keep my commandments and my instructions?"

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

29 See, the LORD has given you the Sabbath; for that reason He gives you bread for two days on the sixth day. Remain, everyone, in his place; no one is to leave his place on the seventh day."

29 See, the LORD has given you the sabbath; therefore He gives you bread for two days on the sixth day. Remain every man in his place; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day."

29 You see that the LORD has given you the Sabbath, and so on the sixth day he gives you food for two days. Let each person stay where he is; let no one leave his place on the seventh day."

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.

30 So the people rested on the seventh day.

30 So the people rested on the seventh day.

30 So the people rested on the seventh day.

30 So the people rested on the seventh day.

**31** And the house of Israel named the bread manna, and it was like coriander seed, white, and its taste was like wafers with honey.

**31** The house of Israel named it manna, and it was like coriander seed, white, and its taste was like wafers with honey.

**31** The Israelis named it "manna". It was white like coriander seed, and tasted like a wafer made with honey.

**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.

32 Then Moses said, "This is what the LORD has commanded: 'A full omer of it is to be kept safe throughout your generations, so that they may see the bread that I fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you out of the land of Egypt.'"

32 Then Moses said, "This is what the LORD has commanded, 'Let an omerful of it be kept throughout your generations, that they may see the bread that I fed you in the wilderness, when I brought you out of the land of Egypt.'"

32 Moses said, "This is what the LORD has commanded: 'Set aside one omer of it for future generations, so that they may see the food with which I fed you in the desert when I brought you out of the land of Egypt.'"

**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.

33 And Moses said to Aaron, "Take a jar and put a full omer of manna in it, and place it before the LORD to be kept safe throughout your generations."

33 Moses said to Aaron, "Take a jar and put an omerful of manna in it, and place it before the LORD to be kept throughout your generations."

33 Then Moses told Aaron, "Take a jar, fill it with about one omer of manna, and place it in the LORD's presence, to be preserved throughout future generations."

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.

- The pot of manna which is in the Ark of the Covenant

34 As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron placed it before **the Testimony**, to be kept.

34 As the LORD commanded Moses, so Aaron placed it before the Testimony, to be kept.

34 So Aaron placed it before the Testimony to be kept, just as the LORD had commanded Moses.

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

- "...the Testimony" - the tablets of the Mosaic Law that Aaron later kept in the ark of the covenant (Cf. 25:16)

— Moses told Aaron to "Take a jar and put a full omer of manna in it" before the LORD's presence (i.e., in the ark) "to be kept safe throughout your generations" (v33-34; Cf. Num 17:10-11)

— These physical objects memorialized God's faithful provision of both spiritual and physical foods (Cf. Deut 8:3). Aaron obeyed this command later: when the Tabernacle was constructed (Cf. 40:20).

35 And the sons of Israel ate the manna for forty years, until they came to an inhabited land; they ate the manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan.

35 The sons of Israel ate the manna forty years, until they came to an inhabited land; they ate the manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan.

35 The Israelis ate manna for 40 years until they came to a land where they could settle. They ate manna until they came to the border of the land of Canaan.

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.

- God ceased providing the manna daily just before Israel crossed the Jordan River into the Promised Land (Cf. Joshua 5:12)

36 (Now an omer is a tenth of an ephah.)

36 (Now an omer is a tenth of an ephah.)

36 Now one omer is a tenth of an ephah.

36 Now an omer is the tenth part of an ephah.

God sought to impress major lessons on all of His people through the events recorded in this chapter. These included His ability and willingness to provide regularly for their daily needs, and His desire that they experience His blessing. He gave them Sabbath rest to refresh and strengthen their spirits, as well as ample, palatable food for their bodies: manna in the mornings and quail in the evenings. God still provides for His people in both extraordinary (manna) and ordinary (quail) ways. We should not limit Him by refusing to accept His provisions—however He may provide for our needs.