

THE MANNA OF THE MESSIAH

THE MANNA IN THE DESERT- forty years during the wandering

Complaints of the Israelites

God satisfies them with manna and quail

Manna – bread that is rained down from heaven

Manna was seen as bread from heaven – supernatural origin

Always supplied just for the need – an omer per person

Given every day for forty years –not just in a particular season
not from the tamarisk tree

Israelites did not know what it was - man hu “What is it?”

Jews at the time of Jesus believed that manna was truly supernatural, bread from heaven

God also provided quail – flesh from heaven

Manna was kept in the Ark of the Covenant as a reminder of the ‘bread from heaven’

The bread was both miraculous and holy.

It tasted wafers made with honey – the promised land is a land flowing with milk & honey. It ceased once the Israelites entered the promised land

MANNA AND THE PROMISE FOR THE FUTURE

From non-scriptural sources manna was seen in a fuller light

1. It was miraculous and had existed from before Adam & Eve
untouched by sin – ‘a return to Eden’
2. It was a supernatural reality kept in the Temple in Heaven
3. Common believe that the Messiah would bring back the manna.

The ‘age to come’ signified the time of the Messiah

The righteous will eat the manna during the period between the coming
of the Messiah and the final resurrection of the dead and the restoration of creation

JESUS AND THE NEW MANNA

Jesus referred to the expectation of the new manna from heaven and used it to bring
meaning to the last supper

them. 18 The sea was stirred up because a strong wind was blowing. 19 When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea* and coming near the boat, and they began to be afraid. 20 But he said to them, "It is I. * Do not be afraid." 21 They wanted to take him into the boat, but the boat immediately arrived at the shore to which they were heading.

The Bread of Life Discourse. 22 * The next day, the crowd that remained across the sea saw that there had been only one boat there, and that Jesus had not gone along with his disciples in the boat, but only his disciples had left. 23 Other boats came from Tiberias near the place where they had eaten the bread when the Lord gave thanks. * 24 When the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into boats and came to Capernaum looking for Jesus. 25 And when they found him across the sea they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you get here?" 26 Jesus answered them and said, "Amen, amen, I say to you, you are looking for me not because you saw signs but because you ate the loaves and were filled. 27 Do not work for food that perishes but for the food that endures for eternal life,* which the Son of Man will give you. For on him the Father, God, has set his seal." 28 So they said to him, "What can we do to accomplish the works of God?" 29 Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in the one he sent." 30 So they said to him, "What sign can you do, that we may see and believe in you? What can you do? 31 * Our ancestors ate manna in the desert, as it is written: m

He gave them bread from heaven to eat.' "

heaven?" 2 * 43 Jesus answered and said to them, "Stop murmuring* among yourselves. 44 No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draw him, and I will raise him on the last day. 45 It is written in the prophets: 'They shall all be taught by God.'

32 So Jesus said to them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave the bread from heaven; my Father gives you the true bread from heaven." 33 For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." 34 So they said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always." 35 * Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me will never hunger, and whoever believes in me will never thirst." 36 But I told you that although you have seen [me], you do not believe. 37 Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and I will not reject anyone who comes to me, 38 because I came down from heaven not to do my own will but the will of the one who sent me." 39 And this is the will of the one who sent me, that I should not lose anything of what he gave me, but that I should raise it [on] the last day. 40 For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life, and I shall raise him [on] the last day."

Everyone who listens to my Father and learns from him comes to me. w 46 Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God; he has seen the Father. x 47 Amen, amen, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. 48 I am the bread of life. 49 Your ancestors ate the manna in the desert, but they died; 50 this is the bread that comes down from heaven so that one may eat it and not die. 51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven; whoever eats this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh for the life of the world. z

41 The Jews murmured about him because he said, "I am the bread that came down from heaven," 42 and they said, "Is this not Jesus, the son of Joseph? Do we not know his father and mother? Then how can he say, 'I have come down from

52 The Jews quarreled among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us [his] flesh to eat?" 53 Jesus said to them, "Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you do not have life within you. 54 Whoever eats* my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him on the last day. 55 For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. 56 Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me and I in him. 57 Just as the living Father sent me and I have life because of the Father, so also the one who feeds on me will have life because of me. a 58 This is the bread that came down from heaven. Unlike your ancestors who ate and still died, whoever eats this bread will live forever." 59 These things he said while teaching in the synagogue in Capernaum.

6. 18-21: The fifth sign is a nature miracle, portraying Jesus sharing Yahweh's power. Cf the parallel stories following the multiplication of the loaves in Mk 6, 45-52 and Mt 14, 22-23.
6. 18: *Walking on the sea*, although the Greek (cf Jn 6, 16) could mean "on the seashore" or "by the sea" (cf Jn 21, 1), the parallelism, especially Mt 14, 25, make clear that Jesus walked upon the water. John may allude to Job 9, 8: God "treads upon the crests of the sea."
6. 20: *It is I*. Literally, "I am." See also the notes on Jn 4, 26 and Mk 6, 50.
6. 22-71: Discourse on the bread of life; replacement of the manna. Verses 22-34 serve as an introduction, vv 35-59 constitute the discourse proper, vv 60-71 portray the reaction of the disciples and Peter's confession.
6. 23: Possibly a later interpolation, to explain how the crowd got to Capernaum.
6. 27: *The food that endures for eternal life*: cf Jn 4, 14, on water "springing up to eternal life."
6. 31: *Bread from heaven*: cf Ex 16, 4, 15, 23-24 and the notes there; Ps 78, 24. The manna, thought to have been hidden by Jeremiah (2 Mc 2, 5-9), was expected to reappear miraculously at Passover, in the last days.

The Words of Eternal Life. * 60 Then many of his disciples who were listening said, "This saying is hard; who can accept it?" 61 Since Jesus knew that his disciples were murmuring about this, he said to them, "Does this shock you? 62 What if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before?" 63 It is the spirit that gives life, while the flesh* is of no avail. The words I have spoken to you are spirit and life. 64 But there are some of you who do not believe." Jesus knew from the beginning the ones who would not believe and the one who would betray him. b 65 And he said, "For this reason I have told you that

no one can come to me unless it is granted him by my Father. "

n Mt 6, 11.—o Jn 4, 15.—p Is 55, 1-3; Am 8, 11-13.—q Jn 20, 29.—r Jn 4, 34; Mt 26, 39; Heb 10, 9.—s Jn 10, 28-29; 17, 12, 18, 9.—t Jn 2, 25.—u Mt 13, 54-57; Mk 6, 1-4; Lk 4, 22.—v Ex 16, 2, 7, 8; Lk 4, 22.—w Is 54, 13; Jer 31, 33-34.—x Jn 1, 18, 7, 29; Ex 33, 20.—y 1 Cor 10, 3, 5.—z Mt 26, 26-27; Lk 22, 19.—a Jn 5, 26.—b Jn 13, 11.

6. 35-59: Up to v 50, "bread of life" is a figure for God's revelation in Jesus. In vv 51-56, the eschatological theme comes to the fore. There may thus be a break between vv 50 and 51.
6. 43: *Murmuring*: the word may reflect the Greek of Ex 16, 27, 8.
6. 54-58: *Eats*: the verb used in these verses is not the classical Greek verb used of human eating, but that of animal eating, "munch" or "graw." This may be part of John's emphasis on the reality of the flesh and blood of Jesus (cf Jn 6, 55), but the same verb eventually became the ordinary verb in Greek meaning "eat."
6. 60-71: These verses refer more to themes of vv 35-50 than to those of 51-56 and seem to be addressed to members of the Johannine community who found it difficult to accept the high christology reflected in the bread of life discourse.
6. 62: This unfinished conditional sentence is obscure. Probably there is a reference to v 49-51. Jesus claims to be the bread that comes down from heaven (50); this claim provokes incredulity (60); and so Jesus is pictured as asking what his disciples will say when he goes up to heaven.
6. 63: *Spirit* . . . *flesh*: probably not a reference to the eschatological body of Jesus but to the supernatural and the natural, as in Jn 3, 6, *Spirit and life*: all Jesus said about the bread of life is: the revelation of the Spirit.

66 As a result of this, many [of] his disciples returned to their former way of life and no longer accompanied him. 67 Jesus then said to the Twelve, "Do you also want to leave?" 68 Simon Peter answered him, "Master, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. 69 We have come to believe and are convinced that you are the Holy One of God." 70 Jesus answered them, "Did I not choose you twelve? Yet is not one of you a devil?" 71 He was referring to Judas, son of Simon the Iscariot; it was he who would betray him, one of the Twelve. d