



MT. ROSE REFORMED
ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The Bread of Life

Reverend Scott Johnson | August 17, 2025 | Exodus 16:1-36

Old Testament Reading

The Old Testament reading is Exodus, chapter 16, verses 1 through 36. So this is the whole chapter. And this is God's holy, his inspired, infallible word. Let's hear the word of God.

They set out from Elim, and all the congregation of the people of Israel came to the wilderness of sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the 15th day of the second month, after they had departed from the land of Egypt. And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. And the people of Israel said to them, would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt when we sat by the meat pot and ate bread to the full.

For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger. Then the Lord said to Moses, behold, I am about to 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 they will walk in my law or not.

On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily. So Moses and Aaron said to all the people of Israel, at evening you shall know that it was the Lord who brought you out of the land of Egypt. And in the morning you shall see the glory of the Lord, because he has heard your grumbling against the Lord. And for what are we that you grumble against us?

And Moses said, when the Lord gives you in the evening meat to eat, and in the morning bread to the full, because the Lord has heard your grumbling, that you grumble against him, what are we? Your grumbling is not against us, but against the Lord. Then Moses said to Aaron, say to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, come near before the Lord, for he has heard your grumbling.

And as soon as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the Lord appeared in the cloud. And the Lord said to Moses, I have heard the grumbling of the people of Israel. Say to them, at twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread. Then you shall know that I am the Lord, your God.

In the evening, quail came up and covered the camp. And in the morning, dew lay around the camp. And when the dew had gone up, there was on the face of the wilderness a fine flake like thing, fine as frost on the ground. When the people 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 that the Lord has given you to eat. This is what the Lord has gathered of it. Each of you as much as he can eat. You shall take each an omer according to the number of the persons that each of you has in his tent.

And the people of Israel did so. They gathered some more, some less. But when they measured it with an omer, whoever gathered much had nothing left over, and whoever gathered little had no lack. Each of them gathered as much as he could eat. And Moses said to them, let no one leave any of it over till the morning.

But they did not listen to Moses. And some left part of it till the morning. And it bred worms and stank, and Moses was angry with them. Morning by morning, they gathered it, each as much as he could eat. But when the sun grew hot, it melted.

On the sixth day, they gathered twice as much bread, two omers each. And when all the leaders of the congregation came and told Moses, he said to them, this is what the Lord has. Tomorrow is a day of solemn rest, a holy Sabbath to the Lord. Bake what you will, bake, and boil what you will boil. And all that is left over lay aside to be kept till the morning.

So they laid it aside till the morning, as Moses commanded them. And it did not stink, and there were no worms in it. Moses said, eat it today, for today is a Sabbath to the Lord. Today you will not find it in the field. Six days you shall gather it. But on the seventh day, which is a Sabbath, there will be none.

On the seventh day, some of the people went out to gather, but they found none. And the Lord said to Moses, how long will you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws? See, the Lord has given you the Sabbath. Therefore on the sixth day, he gives you bread for two days. Remain each of you in his place. Let no one go out of his place on the seventh day. So the people rested on the seventh day.

Now the house of Israel called its name 'manna'. It was like coriander seed, white. And the taste of it was like wafers made with honey. Moses said, this is what the Lord has commanded. Let an omer of it be kept throughout your generations so 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 jar and put an omer of manna in it and place it before the Lord to be kept throughout your generations, as the Lord commanded Moses. So Aaron placed it before the testimony to be kept. The people of Israel ate the manna 40 years till they came to a habitable land. They ate the manna till they came to the border of the land of Canaan. And Omer is the tenth part of an ephah.

New Testament Reading

And the New Testament reading is John 6:41, 51 and this is part of the Lord's interaction with the Jews after the feeding of the 5,000 in which he instructs them concerning the true bread from heaven, which of course is himself. So John 6:41,51 so the Jews grumbled about him because he said, I am the bread that came down from heaven. They said, is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know how does he now say, I have come down from heaven?

Jesus answered them, do not grumble among yourselves. No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him, and I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the prophets, and they will all be taught by God. Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me. Not that anyone has seen the Father, except he who is from God. He has seen the Father.

Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.

The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God will stand forever.

We are continuing our look at the book of Exodus, and last Sunday we saw what happens when the Israelites were led to a place where there was no water or there was water there, but it was undrinkable because it was bitter. And what happened was that the Israelites complained. They grumbled. Verse 24 says the people grumbled against Moses, saying, what shall we drink now, in this passage which we read here a few minutes ago, beginning in chapter 16, verse 1, this was probably several weeks after what took place last week.

But we see in this passage at the beginning what happens when the Israelites are led to a place with no food and surprise, surprise, their response is to complain, to grumble. And so we are told in verse two. And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. You can't accuse the Israelites of being inconsistent. They were predictable. They were consistent. No matter what sort of adversity came their way, you could rely on it. Their first response was to grumble, to complain.

And as we go along in the book of Exodus, we'll see that this pattern does not stop, but they continue to complain along the way. But what I want to focus on with you today is not the grumbling of the Israelites, but the response of God to the Israelites, how He responded to their complaining and grumbling. And that is, he responded by giving them food to eat. First, he gave them quail in the evening, and then in the morning. And for the next 40 years, he gave them manna to eat as their daily bread.

First of all, the fact that God didn't simply destroy the Israelites for their unbelief, for their sinful complaining against them, is a testimony to the grace of God, the mercy of God. And no doubt this demonstration of God's patience, His forbearance, was one reason why the Lord gave the manna to the Israelites in the wilderness, to show them that he does not deal with them as their sins deserve. But as we read on in this chapter, and as we consider what other parts of Scripture say about this manna, we learn that there were other reasons why the Lord gave the Israelites this manna in the wilderness. And we'll consider two of those reasons today. There are two reasons why God gave His people manna in the wilderness beyond, simply to provide for them so that they could live.

God Gave the Israelites Manna to Test Them

And the first reason is this. The Lord gave manna to his people in the wilderness in order to test them, to see if they would obey. The chapter, chapter 16 begins with the people of Israel leaving the place called Elam. And if you remember from last week, Elam was almost like a little paradise on earth. There was a lot of water there, 12 springs of water. Presumably there was plenty of, plenty of food there of some sort. If there wasn't, we would have read about the Israelites complaining about that.

However, it was the Lord's will for the people of Israel not to remain in Elam, where there was food and water and life was relatively easy. But it was his will that they would go through the wilderness. It was God's purpose for them that in order for them to be brought into the promised Land, they would have to get there by going through the adversity, the affliction of the wilderness. And so they leave Elam and they come to a place called the Wilderness of Sin. And by the way, in case you've ever wondered about the name of that place, even though the Hebrews did a lot of sinning in that place, the name of the wilderness of sin has nothing to do with sin as we know it. It just so happens that that Hebrew word is the. Is pronounced sin. So it has nothing to do with sin as we understand it, but it is just the wilderness of sin. It's just the name of it.

But sometime after they arrived to this place, the Israelites, they complained against Moses because they complained against Aaron as well. But they complained because there was no food to be had there. Verse 3, chapter 16. Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full. For you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.

All of a sudden, all of those years, centuries of backbreaking toil, of abject misery, being under the bondage, the tyranny of Pharaoh, all of a sudden, to the Israelites, those were the good old days. Every day was like an all you can eat buffet. Life was wonderful. But you, Moses and Aaron, you had to go and ruin all of it by bringing us out into this desert in order to kill us. You really have to wonder how well their memory was at this point of what their life was like in Egypt. But of course, a person or people, in this case with the complaining spirits, will say almost anything in order to give vent to their grumbling.

As Moses and Aaron later point out to the Israelites, their complaining, their grumbling was not really against them, but it was against the lord himself. Verse 8. They tell them, your grumbling is not against us, but against the Lord. And how true that is for us as well. When we find ourselves murmuring in our hearts or complaining. So often, we direct our complaints to this person or that person. But when we examine our hearts, what we find is that really our complaint is against God.

It is God who has brought us into these circumstances. It is God who is sovereign over the situation. And we don't like it. And instead of complaining directly to him, we complain to those that we can blame for bringing us there. And that's exactly what the Israelites were doing. Moses and Aaron were the targets of their unhappiness, their grumbling, but really their complaint was with God.

Now, at this point, you would expect that the Lord would respond to all of this ungratefulness, this complaining spirit on the behalf of the Israelites, with righteous indignation, with his judgment, with his wrath. But instead of raining down fire and brimstone upon the people of Israel as they deserved. He tells Moses that he is going to do something quite different. He is going to rain bread down from heaven upon his people, and so he will not deal with them as they deserve, but he will be merciful. He not only gives them bread in the morning, but the night before. He gives them quail as a kind of hors d'oeuvre to tide them over until the morning.

But here's an illustration of what is true of God in all of his dealings with us as Christians. Psalm 103 says, he does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. And how thankful you and I should be that this is true of God, that though he is righteous, though he is holy, though he is in his rights to deal with us according to the terms of strict justice, he does not do that. But he is merciful, he is gracious, and in Jesus Christ he has shown us mercy. He is not given us that judgment that we deserve.

If we were to cry out for fairness, we wouldn't want that from God. But he is merciful, and his purpose for us, his loving purpose for us in Christ is to redeem us, to sanctify us. And that was his purpose for his people, his people, Israel in the wilderness as well. And one way that he would show forth his loving, gracious purpose to them was to give them bread to feed them, even in spite of their grumbling and complaining.

The Lord provided for them, and he gave them this, or gave them their daily bread in the form of manna. The manna in the morning would appear on the ground as the dew evaporated. Moses tells us in verse 15 that when the people of Israel saw it, they said to one another, what is it? For? They did not know what it was. And the question that they asked, what is it that became the name for this mysterious heavenly food? The Hebrew word for what is *mon*. And so *mana* or *manna* comes from the word for what? What is it? Well, that's its name. But maybe you've wondered the same thing that the Israelites did.

What was this manna exactly? What did it look like? What did it taste like? Well, Moses gives us some description of it in verse 14. He says, and when the dew had gone up, there was on the face of the wilderness a fine flake like thing, fine as frost on the ground. And then he says in verse 31, now the house of Israel called its name Manna. It was like Coriander seed white. And the taste of it was like wafers made with honey.

And so it was a fine substance, it was flaky, it was white, like coriander seed, which, to be honest, I don't know exactly what that looks like, but if you do, it looked like that it tasted like wafers made with honey. And the fact that it tasted like honey, that it was sweet, probably meant that it was quite a delicacy for the people of Israel. It's not hard to imagine that, unlike us today, we love our sweet things. We have an abundance of sugary snacks to eat, but not so for the people of Israel.

So for them, it would have been a delicacy, quite a special treat, at least at first, because eventually, as you know, the Israelites will begin to complain because of all the manna that they have to eat every day. But this manna was from the Lord. It was for their good. It was a blessing. It was good to eat. And this wasn't some kind of naturally occurring substance. Some people have tried to argue, just like with the parting of the Red Sea, there's natural explanations that can account for what happened. That's not the case with the manna. It wasn't the case with the Red Sea.

You're not going to go to the Sinai Peninsula today and find on the ground a line there, a manna, like they did in the days of the wilderness wanderings. But this was God's supernatural, miraculous provision for his people during their 40 years in the wilderness. You notice that when those 40 years were up, the manna stopped. So this was God's supernatural provision that they may eat and live in the wilderness. It was truly, as it is called in this passage, bread from heaven. It was a heaven sent food for his people.

Now, when the Lord said to Moses that he was going to give the Israelites this manna, he said that he would give it to them as a test. It would be a test. Look at verse four. Then the Lord said to Moses, behold, I am about to 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 they will walk in my law or not.

So this was the test. Would the Israelites obey the commandments of God? Would they walk in his law? Would they do what he commanded them to do? And a big part of this test of

obedience was that the Israelites were commanded to do something that would have been contrary to their common sense. The people of Israel, they were an agricultural people. So naturally they knew that there was wisdom in storing up food for the future so that if the crops didn't come in next year, you would have food on hand to survive.

However, the Lord here commands the Israelites to do the very opposite of anything like that. They were only to gather enough manna for that day. This was not supposed to be a trip to Costco where you load up, you know, it was six months of food, food, but only for that day. They were to gather as much manna as they needed. Verse 4 says, the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day.

Specifically, they are to gather about an omer each. Apparently an omer is about two quarts. And this would have been enough food to sustain the average Israelite for the day. I don't know if this would be enough food to for the average American today, but it was enough for the Israelites back then. And the only day that they were to gather more than one omer was on the sixth day, when they had to gather enough for two days. And the reason for that was because the seventh day was the Sabbath day. And on the Sabbath day, they were to rest.

They were to rest for their usual labors, which included going out and gathering manna in the morning. And so on the night of the sixth day, the Lord would miraculously preserve this manna from going bad. It wouldn't get rotten overnight as it would on the other days of the week. And so the Israelites were commanded to gather only enough manna that they needed for that day for each person. That was the test.

Well, how did they do? Did they pass the test? Well, many of them did. In fact, probably most of them did. However, some we learn failed miserably. Verse 20 says, but they did not listen to Moses. Some left part of it till the morning, and the bread, worms and stank. And Moses was angry with them. And then later, not only that, but on the seventh day, when the Israelites were commanded that they were not to go out and gather manna that morning, some of the people went out anyway looking for manna on the ground. And so the Lord says to Moses in verse 28, how long will you refuse to keep my commandments and my laws?

Of course, Moses himself is not the one who was guilty of breaking God's commandments. But the Lord is addressing the people of Israel through Moses. And so his verdict was that the Israelites failed the test. They did not obey his commandments, they were not faithful. They broke his laws concerning this manna.

Of course, if you and I Had been there, if we had been part of the Israelite people in the wilderness, we would have passed with flying colors, right? We would have kept God's word to the T. We would not have tried to gather any more than that. We need that day. We certainly would not have gone out on the Sabbath morning to seek for manna.

Well, let me ask you this. Have you ever worried about how you're going to pay your bills next month? Have you ever been anxious about your future income? Have you ever felt a kind of

fear or anxiety about some possibility of a financial disaster? If you have said yes to those questions, and I think that's true for all of us, that you and I have been guilty of the same kind of thinking, the same kind of reasoning that led some of these Israelites to try to hoard some of the manna for the days ahead.

The Israelites thinking would be very familiar to us. They would reason something like this, sure, the manna was there this morning, but how do I know that it will be there tomorrow morning? It may not be there. And if I wake, what happens if I wake up sick and I can't go out and gather any? I have mouths to feed, I have kids in the house. I'll feel much better, I'll feel much more secure if I simply go out and just gather a little bit more, just to set it aside for the next day, just in case.

And that was their thinking, which really was the fruit of, of distrust. It was their anxiety, their fear, their worry because they had failed to trust in the Lord. And we can all understand that. We have all been there. We fail to trust in the promises of God to provide for us. And so out of that we sinfully in one way or the other, we act in a way that's not pleasing to him.

But really at the heart of the matter, the test of obedience was a test of trust. Would the Israelites believe God? Would they believe him when he promised that he provide manna for the next day? Would they entrust themselves and their welfare into the Lord's hand? That is the test that the Lord gives us, or that is what we face in our day to day lives in this world.

Whenever we are anxious, whenever we are worried, whenever we are fretful about how we will make ends meet, what will we eat, what will we drink, what will we wear, and so on, we are succumbing to that same kind of anxiety and worry that led the Israelites to break God's commandments. Jesus teaches us to pray, give us this day Our daily bread. There's a promise implied in that prayer. The promise is that the Lord will give us our daily bread, just as he supplied, literally, the daily bread for the Israelites with this daily manna on the ground.

Do you really trust in God's promise that he will provide for your needs? Jesus commanded us to, therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble.

Are you anxious about tomorrow? Are you worried about the months ahead, the years ahead? Or are you resting in the promise of God that you need not be anxious for tomorrow? Tomorrow will be anxious for itself. And so God's will for you and me is that we believe his promise. Trust in him that he will provide the daily bread that we need.

Consider the Israelites. We're just considering now in this chapter how the Lord provided manna for them. But we learn later in the Old Testament that the Lord not only provided their daily bread, but he gave them clothes and that they did not wear out. He gave them shoes that did not wear out. They were not in need. They did not go naked and hungry. But the Lord provided provided for them. Of course, he did not give them a gourmet meal every day. He did not

provide them with designer shoes and a fancy wardrobe. But the Lord provided what they needed according to God's definition of what their needs truly were.

And if the Heavenly Father took such good care of his people, then he will certainly take care of you and me today. He loves us in His Son, Jesus Christ, just as he loved his people, then he is still he is the one who promises to provide for you. The One who provided for his people in the wilderness says he will provide for you and me.

And so the first reason why God gave His people manna in the wilderness was to test their obedience.

God Gave the Israelites Manna to Show Their Deepest Need

The second reason God gave Israelites the manna was to show them what their deepest need really was. It wasn't manna, but something deeper. In Deuteronomy chapter 8, verse 3, Moses says this to the people of Israel. This is Deuteronomy 8:3. And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.

Now, when the Bible tells us here that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of God, it is telling us something that is very, very important. Concerning what it means to be human. What does it mean to be a human being? What is man? This is perhaps the most pressing question that we face today. What is man? What does it mean to be a human being?

And there are basically two possible answers to that question. We can distill all the various answers to that question to basically two answers. The first would be the answer that is given by the prevailing worldview of today. That is the worldview, the philosophy of naturalism and materialism. This is a philosophy that denies the truth of God, that he is the creator of all things. It denies the truth of creation, that we were made by God. According to this worldview or philosophy. As a human being, what you are is purely a physical being. You are nothing more than the evolutionary result of chemical reactions, of random mutations. And therefore, you are completely of this material, natural world, this physical world.

Now, of course, you are a complicated physical being. You have certain other needs that other animals don't. You have needs that are emotional and relational and so on. But nevertheless, in essence, you are material. You are the stuff of this world. You are physical, and that's all you are. And based on this understanding of what it means to be man, we would have to say that, yes, man does live by bread alone. As long as our needs are met by the things of this world. Food, water, shelter, safety, relationships, maybe a few other basics. As long as you have these things, then you have all that you need for life. Why? Because you are just a physical being. Therefore, what more could you possibly want?

And yet, some of the most miserable people in this world are those who lack none of these things, who have all of their felt needs met and abundantly met. And yet there is within them a profound emptiness, profound joylessness. This materialistic view of man just doesn't square with reality. We sense that life has to be more. There must be more to life than what this world offers. Even the abundance of all that we can gain from this world. Food, drink, wealth, friendships, and so on. And yet we have a sense that there's got to be more. I need more than this. We're more than just physical beings.

So the second possible answer to the question of what is man? What is a human being, the biblical answer, the true answer, is this. That, yes, we are, in part, physical beings. But more fundamentally, you and I are spiritual. We are spiritual creatures. Of all that God created, including the angels themselves. Of all that God made in all creation, Only one part of his creation was made in his likeness, his image. And that is you. It is me. Man, humanity. And this is where a correct view of man must begin. That at heart, though we are physical, we have bodies, we have physical needs, and so on. At heart you are a spiritual creature. And therefore, because God created you, and because God created you to have life in communion with Him, God has given you an inbuilt longing to have that life in knowing him as your Creator, as your God.

And for that reason, because we are created by God in His image, because we are spiritual in essence, you and I cannot be truly satisfied with only the stuff of this material physical world. And yet, in our sin and unbelief, we seek our life in this world, in our unbelief, we try to feed our souls with the bread, with the things of this world. And yet it doesn't truly satisfy. Man does not live by bread alone.

Earlier we heard from the words of Jesus in the Gospel of John, Our Lord said this. I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh, the manna. Yes, it sustained the life of the Israelites for 40 years through the wilderness. And yet they died.

It did not give them everlasting life, it could not give them eternal life. But the very same Lord who reigned manna down from heaven upon his people Israel, in the fullness of time, He Himself, in His incarnation, he came into our world, this very same God in the person of Jesus Christ. And he came to us in order that we might know him as true bread, true life. He came to die for us, to be raised again in order to give us what is truly bread from heaven. And you can only receive this bread of life, this true bread from heaven. You can only receive it as you come to Jesus Christ by faith.

And until a person puts their trust in Jesus Christ, until a person comes to him by faith believing that he is Lord, believing that he is the Savior of His sins, or the Savior from His sins, until then, Jesus cannot truly, while we cannot truly enjoy him or know him or his life giving bread, we must

come to him by faith. Until we come to know Christ, his word. All that the Scripture reveals will only be so much religious talk. All that takes place in worship, the sacrament, all this will be so much religious ritual, empty of any meaning, until we come to Know the Son of God by faith, apart from faith and the words of the psalmist, a person cannot taste and see that the Lord is good.

In his final book of the Chronicles of Narnia series, CS Lewis and the book is the Last Battle, he describes the scene in which there is a group of dwarves. The dwarves find themselves in what they think, and to them it truly was this dark and filthy stable for donkeys. And because of their spiritual blindness, that's where they were. But there were others who were physically with him, standing with him, but they were standing in a place that was like a paradise. And no matter how many times the others who were standing in what was like a paradise tried to make the dwarves understand that they were not standing in a dirty donkey stable, they would not listen. And as long as they would not listen, they remained in that stable.

And then Lewis describes how Aslan, the king of that world, who of course is Christ, he appears and he makes for the dwarves a feast of fine food. And this is what the book says. Aslan raised his head and shook his mane. Instantly a glorious feast appeared on the dwarf's knees. Pies and tongs and pigeons and trifles and ices. And each dwarf had a goblet of good wine in his right hand, but it wasn't much use. They began eating and drinking greedily enough, but it was clear that they couldn't taste it properly.

They thought they were eating and drinking only the sort of things you might find in a stable. One said he was trying to eat hay, and another said he had got a bit of an old turnip. And a third said he'd found a raw cabbage leaf. And they raised golden goblets of rich red wine to their lips and said, ugh, fancy drinking dirty water out of a trough. Never thought we'd come to this.

The problem with the doors is that they were spiritually blind. And until the Lord takes away that blindness, we can have no taste for the life giving bread that Christ came to give us. And I think the question for us is, do we have such a taste for Christ? Do we have a hunger and a thirst for the spiritual food that only Christ can give us?

In John chapter six, we're told how the Jews followed Jesus after he fed them with the bread. When he fed the 5,000 the bread and the fish, they followed Jesus, but they only followed him for what he could give them, for the bread that he gave them. They failed to see that he himself was the true bread of heaven. Jesus said to them, truly, truly, I say, to you. You are seeking me not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves.

What do you seek for in Jesus? Why would you follow Jesus? What are you seeking for? Some people, they seek Jesus because of some advantage or benefit that they desire to receive from Him. Some people would profess at least to follow Jesus in order to make perhaps their family happy, their parents happy. Some would follow Jesus at least externally. They would seek Jesus only for the advantage that he might give to them, that they might enhance the reputation of being churchgoing Christian people. There are some people, sad to say, who seek Jesus only

because they have this false hope that Jesus will provide for them the earthly riches that they desire. There's only one reason to seek Christ, and that is for the eternal life that he gives for Jesus himself.

Don't follow Jesus for some other reason besides Jesus, but follow him for him. That you may know him. That you may know the love of God that comes to you from him. That you may know the joy, the peace, the hope that only comes with a true communion with God through His Son, Jesus Christ. He Himself is the true bread from heaven. Yes, he is the source of every good gift and every perfect gift, every blessing that he gives to us in this world. But that's not why we seek Him. We seek him for himself, because he is life. He is the only one who can fill your heart with the everlasting life that nothing in this world can give. He is the bread of life. Feast on him.

And so God gave His people manna to show them their true need, that is for the bread from heaven. In verse 32, the Lord commands Moses. This he says, or this is what Moses says. This is what the Lord has commanded. Let an omer of it, that is the manna, be kept throughout your generation so that they may see the bread with which I fed you in the wilderness when I brought you out of the land of Egypt.

According to the Book of Hebrews, this manna that had been set aside, eventually it was placed in some kind of golden urn. And eventually, after the ark was built, it was placed into the Ark of the Covenant, along with the tablets containing the Ten Commandments, and also with Aaron's staff that budded it. Presumably, though the Bible doesn't say so, but presumably from time to time, the high priest or someone would take out the jar of manna to remind the Israelites of why the Lord gave their fathers the manna in the wilderness. That was in order to test them, to see if they would obey. But also to show them that their true need was not the manna itself, but the word of God or the life that God gives.

Now, of course, today we no longer have this jar of manna to behold, to look at. We no longer have the ark of God and everything that was in it. But we have something far better than that. We have the promises that God gives to us in the Scripture. And if you ever begin to question God's provision, if you ever begin to worry about whether or not you will have what you need for life in this world, if you ever begin to worry that somehow the Lord is going to withhold something needful for you or good for you, you go to the promise of God in the Scriptures.

Go to Romans 8:32, "He who did not spare his own son, but gave him up for his all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?" The Israelites grumbled and complained in the wilderness, and yet the Lord graciously gave them manna to eat. And despite your sin, despite my sin, our Father in heaven, out of his love for us, he graciously gives us His Son, Jesus Christ, to be our Savior from sin. And he promises that if he has given us His Son, how will he not also with him give us all things that we need?

And so God, because He has given you Christ, he will most certainly freely give you all that is truly needful in this life. And he promises to give you all that you need for the fullness, the perfection of life and joy and peace in the world to come. Let's pray.