

Exodus 16:2-15**Are your leaders following God’s vision or their own?****New Revised Standard Version****Complete Jewish Bible**

²The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. ³The Israelites said to them, “If only we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”

²There in the desert the whole community of the people of Isra’el grumbled against Moshe and Aharon. ³The people of Isra’el said to them, “We wish *ADONAI* had used his own hand to kill us off in Egypt! There we used to sit around the pots with the meat boiling, and we had as much food as we wanted. But you have taken us out into this desert to let this whole assembly starve to death!”

⁴Then the LORD said to Moses, “I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction or not. ⁵On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather on other days.”

⁴*ADONAI* said to Moshe, “Here, I will cause bread to rain down from heaven for you. The people are to go out and gather a day’s ration every day. By this I will test whether they will observe my *Torah* or not. ⁵On the sixth day, when they prepare what they have brought in, it will turn out to be twice as much as they gather on the other days.”

⁶So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, “In the evening you shall know that it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, ⁷and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your complaining against the LORD. For what are we, that you complain against us?”

⁶Moshe and Aharon said to all the people of Isra’el, “This evening, you will realize that it has been *ADONAI* who brought you out of Egypt; ⁷and in the morning, you will see *ADONAI*’s glory. For he has listened to your grumblings against *ADONAI* – what are we that you should grumble against us?”

⁸And Moses said, “When the LORD gives you meat to eat in the evening and your fill of bread in the morning, because the LORD has heard the complaining that you utter against him – what are we? Your complaining is not against us but against the LORD.”

⁸Moshe added, “What I have said will happen when *ADONAI* gives you meat to eat this evening and your fill of bread tomorrow morning. *ADONAI* has listened to your complaints and grumblings against him – what are we? Your grumblings are not against us but against *ADONAI*.”

⁹Then Moses said to Aaron, “Say to the whole congregation of the Israelites, ‘Draw near to the LORD, for he has heard your complaining.’” ¹⁰And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they looked toward the wilderness, and the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. ¹¹The LORD spoke to Moses and said, ¹²“I have heard the complaining of the Israelites; say to them, ‘At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall have your fill of bread; then you shall know that I am the LORD your God.’”

⁹Moshe said to Aharon, “Say to the whole community of Isra’el, ‘Come close, into the presence of *ADONAI*, for he has heard your grumblings.’” ¹⁰As Aharon spoke to the whole community of the people of Isra’el, they looked toward the desert; and there before them the glory of *ADONAI* appeared in the cloud; ¹¹and *ADONAI* said to Moshe, ¹²“I have heard the grumblings of the people of Isra’el. Say to them: ‘At dusk you will be eating meat, and in the morning you will have your fill of bread. Then you will realize that I am *ADONAI* your God.’”

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¹³In the evening quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. ¹⁴When the layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilderness was a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground. ¹⁵When the Israelites saw it, they said to one another, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, "It is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat."

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¹³That evening, quails came up and covered the camp; while in the morning there was a layer of dew all around the camp. ¹⁴When the dew had evaporated, there on the surface of the desert was a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground. ¹⁵When the people of Isra'el saw it, they asked each other, "*Man hu?* [What is it?]" because they didn't know what it was. Moshe answered them, "It is the bread which *ADONAI* has given you to eat."

Adapted from http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/8_greek.html

Translations of the Hebrew Bible have relied more on the Greek Septuagint than the Hebrew Bible itself. This is why we say "manna" of its proper Hebrew pronunciation. In Exodus 16:15 most translations read "...they said one to another, 'What is it?'" The King James reads "...they said one to another, It is manna..." But the word "Manna" does not occur in the Hebrew Bible. Verse 15 of Exodus 16 uses the question "Man hu" and verse 31 uses the Hebrew word "Man". If the word Manna does not occur in the Hebrew bible, where does it come from? The only place this word is found is in the Greek Septuagint where the Hebrew word "Man" is written in Greek as "Manna."

Here are the final results of the survey question, "What is the Hebrew name of the bread-like substance God gave Israel in the wilderness." A total of 212 people responded and only 17 (9%) correctly identified the Hebrew word as "Man" (9%). Here is the breakdown by religious affiliation of the 17 who were correct: 7 out of 115 Christians, 6 out of 55 Messianics, 3 out of 17 Jews, and 1 out of 25 people from a different religion.

1. Verses 2-3: Where are the Israelites? What is their complaint? Why do they complain? Is it a physical, spiritual, or emotional complaint – or a mix of these? (Note: I could only find one source which indicated the people had been camping at Mt. Saini for about a year.)
2. Verses 4-5: What does God tell Moses (what will God provide, how will the people gather this provision)? How is the sixth day different from the others? Why?
3. How will this whole process a test of the people? What is it testing? Do you think it is a fair test? Why or why not?
4. Verses 6-7: What do Moses and Aaron tell the people? Who were the people grumbling against in verse 2? Who do Moses and Aaron the people are really grumbling against? If you were one of the people, would you agree with their assertion?
5. Verse 8: What degree of specificity has God given Moses up to this point? How does Moses raise the stakes? How does he know he can raise the stakes? Do you think he knows at this point how the "meat" and "bread" will be supplied? Again, if you were one of the people, would you be satisfied with his claims so far, or would you want more detail?
6. What does Moses repeat? If you were one of the Israelites, what you think of his management / leadership style? Have you ever encountered this style of leadership? How do you react to it?

7. Verses 9-12: Consider the following verses:

Exodus 13:21: "And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night."

Exodus 14:19-20: "And the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them; and the pillar of the cloud went from before their face, and stood behind them. And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and it was a cloud and darkness to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night."

What does Moses tell Aaron to tell the people? What happened while Aaron was speaking to the people? How long has this phenomenon been taking place? Why is its occurrence particularly significant while Aaron is speaking?

8. What does God tell Moses to tell the people? Is this out of sequence with verse 8? How is verse 12 different from verse 8? Are the differences significant? What might the sequence of these verses and the differences in content say about Moses? About spiritual leaders in general?
9. Verses 13-15: How does God supply meat? How does God supply bread? If you were one of the Israelites, would this meat and bread be what you would have been expecting? Why or why not?
10. Imagine this scene: When the dew had evaporated, there on the surface of the desert was a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground. When the people of Isra'el saw it, they asked each other, "*Man hu?* [What is it?]" because they didn't know what it was. Moshe answered them, "It is the bread which *ADONAI* has given you to eat."

How long does it take dew to evaporate? What do you imagine the people are doing during this time? Once the dew evaporates, where is the "fine flaky substance"? What logistical problem does this present for the manna-bakers of the day? When Moses calls this flaky substance the "bread" that God has supplied, what might be running through the minds of the manna-bakers?

11. How can you know with any measure of confidence that you are following God by following Moses versus some Jim Jones? If you are a leader, how can you know that you are following God and not yourself?