

BEHOLD YOUR GOD!

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I have lived in Jerusalem, Mevaseret Zion (a suburb of Jerusalem), Tiberias (on the shore of the Sea of Galilee), and have proclaimed the Messiah of Israel both there and in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Isaiah the Prophet spoke:

‘Go up on a high mountain, you who bring Good News to Zion, lift up your voice with a shout!, you who bring Good News to Jerusalem. Lift it up!, be not afraid. Say to the cities of Judah, “Behold your God!”’ (Isaiah 40:9)

I remember a number of years ago, I had just come back from knocking on Jewish doors in Tulsa for a few hours, and I felt the very heavy weight of rejection. My Jewish people were rejecting me. And that day, the burden came crashing down upon me in a way that I had not experienced before. I felt totally shattered. Discarded. An object of contempt. Despised by my people, because of my love for Messiah and desire to see my Jewish people come to know Him who is Life. The Spirit of the Holy One took me to Luke 6:22-23:

‘Blessed are you when men hate you, and ostracize you, and cast insults at you, and spurn your name as evil, for the sake of the Son of Adam. Be glad in that day, and dance for joy, for behold, your reward is great in Heaven. For in the same way their fathers used to treat the Prophets.’

I looked up after having read the passage and I said, ‘Lord, I don’t feel like dancing for joy.’ And immediately, the Spirit of the Holy One of Israel came upon me and dissolved those feelings of rejection, and I felt Joy! The Joy of the Lord! I knew what David meant when he said in Psalm 94:17: ‘If Yahveh had not been my help, my soul would soon have dwelt in the abode of silence.’ And again in Psalm 27:6: ‘And now my head will be lifted up above my enemies around me, and I will offer in His Tent sacrifices with shouts of joy. I will sing, yes, I will sing praises to Yahveh!’

That’s how I have been able to continue to bring Good News to Zion. The Lord has been my ever present help in time of need. It is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob that not only compels me, but sustains me, too. For who can live under the pressure of rejection and walk in joy? Only those who eat the Bread of Life.

Isaiah declares that Yahveh, the God of Israel, will give Bread that will satisfy the soul of those who love Him and seek His Face:

‘Come!, Eat!, even though you have no money. Why do you labor and spend money on bread that does not satisfy?! Listen to Me!, and you will eat the Good, and your soul will delight in the richness thereof’ (Isaiah 55:2).

What Isaiah was speaking of, was the coming of Messiah Yeshua. God has always given us pictures in the Scriptures of what the Messiah would be like, and what He would do for us. Messiah Yeshua is so humble. He desires to serve you. To feed you the True Bread of Life. Come to the Heavenly Table and eat, and let your soul delight in God your Savior. And by the way, Mevaseret Zion means, ‘one who proclaims Good News to Zion!’

What is This?!

The very first time Israel saw the bread from Heaven, they didn't know what it was (Ex. 16:15). Could you imagine waking up one morning and having the ground covered with a white substance that was to be food for you? The Rabbis say that it sparkled like pearls, from its description in Scripture. It was only a month after Yahveh had led Israel out of Egyptian slavery (Ex. 16:1), that He began to feed Israel with Manna. The word 'Manna' comes from the Hebrew *mahn hoo* (Ex. 16:15), which literally means, 'What is this?!' Israel would later shorten it to *mahn* (what?!, Ex. 16:31). The English word 'Manna' comes from the Septuagint reading of manna (*mahn-na*, Manna).¹ Yahveh would literally rain down bread from Heaven to feed Israel for the 40 years that we were in the Wilderness.

In providing for Israel, Yahveh would test us to see if we would obey His Voice. Obedience to His Voice and His Ways, has always been a test for us Jews. Twice with the incident of the miraculous bread from Heaven, we failed the test. God told us to gather a certain quota every day and not to hoard any for the next day (Ex. 16:4, 19-20), or to go out looking for any on the Sabbath (Ex. 16:23-24). To show us how rebellious we are, there were some of us who didn't think that Yahveh would provide for us the next day too, as He had promised (Ex. 16:4). Some saved the Manna for the next day and it stank and bred maggots (Ex. 16:20).

When the Sabbath Day came there were some of us who went out looking for the Manna when God had said that there wouldn't be any. He had doubled Friday's supply. The leftover was still good for the Sabbath. Our not trusting Yahveh really hurt Him. He said, 'How long will you refuse to keep My Commandments and Instructions (Torah)?!' (Ex. 16:28, 4).

At the very foundation or center of our reality, we don't trust Yahveh. (And many today don't even know that He exists.) We don't believe He loves us, and therefore we don't believe that He will really provide for us. Yes, we thank Him for the job we have and the food we eat, but when it comes down to not knowing where our next meal will come from, we panic and rely on the arm of flesh: ourselves. So it was with our Fathers in the Wilderness; so it is with us today.

The Name Yahveh translates as 'I AM' coming from the verb 'to be.' When Moses asked Him, 'Who shall I say sent me?' God replied (*eh-yeh ah-share eh-yeh*) 'I AM who I AM' or 'I will be what I will be' or, what I have found Him to mean, 'I will be for you whatever you need, whenever you need it' (Ex. 3:13-15). Yahveh was showing us that He was able to be our every need, by delivering us from Egyptian slavery and parting the Red Sea, so we could walk across on dry ground, and drowning our enemies who sought to murder us, and giving us bread miraculously. Everyone had enough and was satisfied (Ex. 16:18, 8). The Manna is said to have tasted like a moist, olive oily, honey cake, that gave us vital power as Num. 11:8 relates to us from the Hebrew (*Lih-shad Ha-Shah-men*).

At the point where there wasn't any food, we rebelled and were so ungrateful to Yahveh. Instead of going to Moses and asking him about the food situation and seeing what Yahveh would do for us, we said, 'If only we had died by the Hand of Yahveh in the land of Egypt! There we had plenty of meat and we ate bread till we were full. Yet you brought us out into this desert to kill this whole assembly with hunger!' (Ex. 16:3) This is the worst part for us, the part that reveals our perverted hearts, our 'grumbling' (Ex.

¹ R. L. Harris, Editor, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. 1 (Chicago: Moody Press, 1980), p. 511. The Septuagint is the Tanach (Hebrew Bible or 'Old Testament') in Greek, written by the Rabbis 250 years before Messiah Yeshua's birth in Bethlehem. A question arises as to why the Rabbis added 'na' to *mahn* to get Manna. In the Exodus account it is *mahn*, but in Numbers 11:7 and Deut. 8:3 and other places it is Manna in the Greek.

16:7, 9, 12). The verb in Hebrew is *lune* and means, ‘to express resentment, dissatisfaction, anger and complaint by grumbling in half-muted tones of hostile opposition to God’s leaders and the authority which He has invested in them.’² We despised Yahveh and took it out on Moses and Aaron, the ones He had given us, to lead us from Egypt to the Promised Land. We would die in the Wilderness and a new generation of us would grow up with the Shekina Glory Cloud in our midst and the Manna. We would believe Yahveh and walk across the Jordan River with Joshua, similar to how Israel crossed the Red Sea with Moses. And we would inherit the Land. A Land Yahveh says, that is filled with milk and honey; abundance and blessing.

Yahveh commands Moses to take a portion of the heavenly Manna and place it in a jar and set it before the Testimony (i.e. the Ark). This was to be an eternal reminder to us that our God fed us for 40 years, and there were no Albertson’s around. Yahveh fed us, we ate, and were satisfied (Ex. 16:8). Yahveh was displaying for us, that no matter how bleak or desperate the situation looks, He is able to provide for us and to sustain us, even in a desert.

The Ark itself is a picture of the Messiah of Israel. Wood overlaid with gold pictures His Humanity (wood) and Deity (gold), and the Manna is a picture of the Messiah’s ability to feed us with the True Bread from Heaven. The Bread that will give us Eternal Life. The Manna was a miraculous picture that pointed to Messiah Yeshua as the Bread of Life.

The True Bread from Heaven

In the book of Yohanan (John 6:1-14), Yeshua is seen multiplying just a few loaves of bread to feed 5,000 Jewish men, plus women and children. The people, seeing a similar miracle to the provision of the Manna in the Wilderness, realize that Yeshua must be the Prophet that Moses spoke of.³ The Messiah of Israel.

Yeshua uses this miracle to tell us that we were seeking Him not because of who He is (the Messiah, God in the Flesh), and what He can do for us (give us Eternal Life), but because we ate the physical bread and wanted to eat more of the physical bread. We were much like our Fathers who wanted to be sure that we always had a supply of bread, but missed the One who was supplying it.

After all had eaten and were satisfied, Yeshua had them pick up the remains and it filled 12 baskets. Five thousand Jewish men, along with women and children, had eaten from just five barley loaves (John 6:9), and the fragments or leftovers filled 12 baskets. This pictures that the Messiah as the Bread of Heaven, is more than enough for the 12 Tribes of Israel, and that we are not to let one Word of His fall to the ground and become ‘common’ or meaningless in our life.

In the Exodus account of the Manna, the people were told to gather enough for each day. The Hebrew literally says, ‘and they will gather a word a day’ (Ex. 16:4: *vih-lock-too dih-var yom*). In Dt. 8:3 Yahveh declares that the time in the Wilderness was a time of testing for us, that we might see what was in our hearts, concerning our trust or faith in Yahveh:

‘He humbled you and let you be hungry, and fed you with Manna which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that He might make you understand that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every Word that proceeds out of the Mouth of

² Ibid., p. 475.

³ Deuteronomy 18:18-19: ‘I will raise up a prophet from among their countrymen like you and I will put My words in his mouth and he shall speak to them all that I command him. It shall come about that whoever will not listen to My Words which he shall speak in My Name, I Myself will require it of him!’

Yahveh.’

Yeshua is also known as the Word of Yahveh and just as the ancient Israelites needed a word from God every day, their daily portion of Manna, so too we need to feed upon the Heavenly Bread every day, that we might have vital power.

Yeshua would declare His Messiahship and Deity, by telling us that He was the True Bread from Heaven. The Manna pointed to Yeshua’s ability to sustain and satisfy His people. And that eating of Him, would gain one Eternal Life. What Yeshua was speaking about was belief in Him. He would be sacrificed for us, crucified, so we could eat of the Sacrifice, much the way that the priests ate of the sacrificial animals from the Temple Altar:

‘Yeshua answered them and said, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, you seek Me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate of the loaves and were filled. Do not work for the food which perishes, but for the Food which endures to Eternal Life, which the Son of Adam will give to you, for on Him the Father, God, has set His Seal.’

‘Therefore they said to Him, ‘What shall we do, so that we may work the works of God?’ Yeshua answered and said to them, ‘This is the Work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.’ So they said to Him, ‘What then do You do for a sign, so that we may see, and believe You? What work do You perform? Our Fathers ate the Manna in the wilderness; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread out of Heaven to eat.’

‘Yeshua then said to them, ‘Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the True Bread out of Heaven. For the Bread of God is that which comes down out of Heaven, and gives Life to the world.’

‘Then they said to Him, ‘Lord, always give us this Bread.’ Yeshua said to them, ‘I am the Bread of Life. He who comes to Me will not hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst. But I said to you that you have seen Me, and yet do not believe. All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will certainly not cast out. For I have come down from Heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.’

‘This is the Will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the Will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him, will have Eternal Life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day’ (John 6:26-40).

This is a time for decision my friend. Give yourself to Yeshua our Messiah. Let your heart lead you. Yeshua is the Good News that Isaiah was speaking of. Yeshua is what the Manna in the Wilderness pictured or pointed to. Yahveh desires to fill you with the True Bread from Heaven: Yeshua. Contact me and I’ll share the Joy of Messiah with you. Why work for bread that perishes?⁴

⁴ Revised on 14 January 2013.