



During their journey through the desert God provided the Israelites with daily food, in the form of manna.

The complete text describing this is to be found in Exodus 16:2-31.

The symbolism of the manna.

When the Jews were wondering whether Jesus was the promised Messiah, they asked Him:

- *What sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? Our ancestors ate the **manna** in the wilderness; as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.. (John 6:30-31)*

Jesus answered them:

- ***I am the living bread** that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. **This bread is my flesh, which I will give** for the life of the world. (John 6:51)*

Jesus identified Himself with the manna from the desert - bread that has life in Itself and gives life to all that eat it.

As the apostle John wrote:

- ***The Word became flesh** and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14)*

He sees in Jesus the embodiment of the Word become flesh, the living bread, that had to be collected daily, as 'manna'.

'Maggots' in the manna.

The manna had to be collected each morning, enough for each day.

- *Then Moses said to them, "**No one is to keep any of it until morning.**" However, some of them paid no attention to Moses; they kept part of it until morning, but it was **full of maggots** and began to smell. (Exodus 16:19-20)*

It is remarkable that the manna was spoilt by coccus ilicis maggots the following day – the same worm that points to the death and suffering of Jesus, as is described in a separate study¹.

Symbolism:

To remain spiritually healthy, the Living Bread, just like the manna, will have to be 'collected' daily, for it can only be 'kept' for one day.

Daily contact with Jesus is therefore of vital importance. To remain spiritually healthy, the Living Bread, just like the manna, will have to be 'eaten' daily.

The contact and the relationship with Jesus is food for the soul.

¹ Study: Psalm 22:6 - I am a worm.



Regularity.

The manna only remained good for one day, except when it was collected the day before the Sabbath. It remained good the following day as well, because no work was allowed on the Sabbath. The manna was prepared on the day it was collected, so that it could be eaten on the Sabbath.

The manna had to be collected again the day after the Sabbath.

Symbolism:

Seeking contact with Jesus can perhaps be put off for one day, but irregular 'collection of the manna', or lengthy interruptions will certainly slowly extinguish spiritual life.

Reading the Word of God, de Bible, regularly, and contact with Jesus in prayer are indispensable instruments of healthy spiritual life.