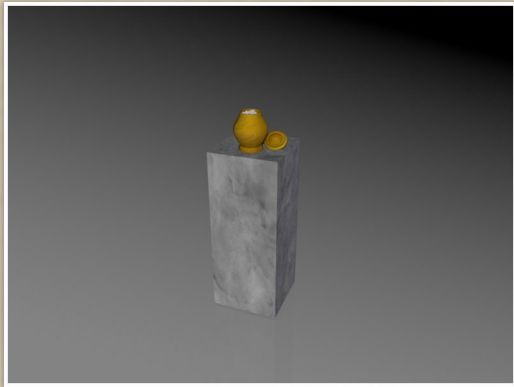


## Manna



The manna or “bread from heaven” is the food provided miraculously to the people of Israel during the 40 years of his pilgrimage through desert during exodus.<sup>1</sup> The word manna comes from the expression “What is it?” It is believed that the etymology of this word comes from the Hebrew word “mân” and from the Aramaic word “manna”, which means “what?” The text explains this is because “they did not know what it was”.<sup>2</sup> In the Bible, manna is also called “corn from heaven” and “noble bread”.<sup>3</sup> Each day with the dew, except Saturdays.<sup>4</sup> Early in the morning “thin flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor” and tasted like “wafers

with honey”<sup>5</sup> and “all the finest olive oil”; it was “like white coriander seed and looked like resin”.<sup>6</sup> Even though it was edible in its natural state, it was usually grinded in the molar or it was crushed in a mortar, and then it was boiled or pies were made.<sup>7</sup> It had to have all the nutritive properties needed for health, since it was possible to live with that kind of food.

The quantity that had to be gathered in per day for each person was an “omer”<sup>8</sup>, the equivalent to two litres.<sup>9</sup> They could not leave anything for the next day. Those who disobeyed and took more quantity than needed, their food went off. But there was an exception related to the quantity they had to gather in. When the days before the Saturday arrived, Hebrews were informed that they had to stock up with a double share, because in the sacred day they wouldn't be able to find manna.<sup>10</sup> God said this was a trial to see if the law was enforced. Some people of the village went to gather some in, but they could not find it.<sup>11</sup> God preserved miraculously the manna that was saved for Saturday and it did not go off. The manna stopped falling when the Israelite entered the promised land.<sup>12</sup> Moses received instructions about keeping a vessel with manna for future generations; he kept it in a glass or a gold urn inside the Ark of the Covenant.<sup>13</sup>

### Biblical References:

1. Exodus 16: 1-36
2. Exodus 16: 15
3. Psalms 78: 24, 25
4. Exodus 16: 26, 27
5. Exodus 16: 14, 31
6. Numbers 11: 7
7. Numbers 11: 8
8. Exodus 16: 16, 22
9. Exodus 16: 32
10. Exodus 16: 23, 25
11. Exodus 16: 27-30
12. Exodus 16: 35; Joshua 5: 12
13. Exodus 16: 33; Hebrews 9: 4