

# Lessons from the Manna

*The Present Truth* – April 11, 1901

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## GATHERING WHAT GOD GIVES

When God rained down bread from heaven in the wilderness, the people had to go out and "gather a certain rate every day." All that anyone can do to get food is simply to gather what God gives. Of the animals and birds, we are told in the 104th Psalm:—

"These wait all upon Thee,  
That Thou mayest give them their meat in due season.  
That Thou givest them, they gather;  
Thou openest Thine hand, they are filled with good."

And this is just as true of all mankind. People often forget this, and think that they "make a living" for themselves, but this is not possible. God gives us our life, and the means of sustaining it, and all that anyone does "for a living," is for the purpose of gathering what God has provided.

"We plough the fields and scatter  
The good seed on the land,  
But it is fed and watered  
By God's almighty hand;

He sends the snow in winter,  
The warmth to swell the grain,  
The breezes and the sunshine,  
And soft refreshing rain."

No matter who may sow, or plant, or reap, "God giveth the increase," and we are fed daily from His table, just as much as were the Children of Israel in the desert, when they gathered every morning a fresh portion of manna.

Loot at our picture and compare it with the one that we had last week, and you will see that they both really represent the same thing, gathering the bread that God has rained down from heaven.

## THE DEW AND RAIN

Did you notice, in reading over the story, that the manna came with the dew? It is the dew that brings fruitfulness and food. In the beginning, before a drop of rain

had fallen from the sky, "there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground," to make the whole land verdant and fruitful.

Since the flood, rain has also fallen from the clouds, and it is through this moisture, the dew and the rain, that God sends us our food.

You will perhaps remember what the prophet Elijah said to the wicked king Ahab: "There shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." And [the] result was that "there was a sore famine in Samaria," no food for the hungry people to gather.

Moses told the Children of Israel that the land to which God was leading them was a land that the Lord's eyes were always upon, a land "that drinketh water of the rain of heaven," "that thou mayest gather in thy corn, and wine, and oil."

#### APRIL SHOWERS

We are told also in the Psalms that the Lord visits the earth and waters it, and because of this "the valleys are covered over with corn." So to us, as to Israel of old, the bread that God sends comes with the dew and rain of heaven. So we must be glad to see the "April showers," and thank the Lord for them, for this "early rain" is to provide for the gathering of the bread in the Autumn harvest.

The dew is used in Scripture to represent the Holy Spirit. It is the gentle dew of the Spirit which God sends upon us from above that brings Jesus, the true Manna, to feed our souls, and to make us strong and happy.

#### "AN EQUALITY"

Have you ever noticed that although in gathering the manna, some were not able to gather so much as others, yet when they measured the quantity gathered, "he that had gathered much had nothing over, and he that had gathered little had no lack"?

Paul explains how this was brought about; he says: "I mean not that other men be eased, and ye burdened; but by an equality, that now at this time your abundance may be a supply for their want, that their abundance also may be a supply for your want; that there may be equality; as it is written, he that had gathered much had nothing over, and he that had gathered little had no lack."

When one is able to gather more of the good gifts of God than he needs for his own use, he is not to hoard it up. Notice what happened to the manna when it was so kept. It began to decay, and became a curse instead of a blessing.

When one has more than he needs, it is to be given to one who has less than he needs. So your abundance may be a supply for the lack of some one else; and

when you have not enough, the abundance of another will supply your lack, and there will be "an equality."

This is God's plan, and when it was followed by the early Christians, no man said "that ought of the things that he had was his own," but they "had all things common." And as God gives abundance for all, when this was done every one had plenty.

Some people are too lazy to gather for themselves, and some waste what their Heavenly Father gives them, as did the Prodigal Son, until "he began to be in want."

But usually, when there is anyone in want, it is because some one else has more than his share, for God has provided enough so that if there be "an equality," every one will have sufficient.