

EUCHARIST

DISCOVERING THE MASS IN THE BIBLE

STUDY GUIDE

SESSION 4



LECTIO

UNVEILING SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION

BRANT PITRE

Nil Stat: Dr. Joseph E. Burns, Censor Deputatus

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SESSION 4

MIRACLES OF EXODUS: MANNA AND WATER



OPENING PRAYER

Let joys be joined to solemn feasts.
Let praises from the depths resound.
Let old things pass, make all things new.
Let heart and voice and works abound.

Recall that final evening meal
When Christ did offer lamb and bread
According to the ancient law
From patriarchs inherited:

The feast of the Paschal lamb now over,
The Body of the Lord was shared.
Thus everything, to all and each,
From his own hands was then declared.

—St. Thomas Aquinas' Eucharistic hymn "Sacris Solemnis Juncta Sint Gaudia" ("Let Joys Be Joined to Solemn Feasts") from The Aquinas Prayer Book, Sophia Institute Press

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the fourth session in our study of the Eucharist. In his preaching, Jesus speaks of himself as "the bread which comes down from heaven" (John 6:50). While many Catholics hear these words and automatically think of the Eucharist, what came to mind for the Jews to whom Jesus first preached these words?



Melchisedech and Abraham offering the bread and wine, The Last Supper, Gathering the Manna, / Alfredo Dagli Orti / The Art Archive at Art Resource, NY

In speaking about himself in this way, Jesus not only looks forward to the Eucharist, but also recalls another time when bread, raining down from heaven, made its appearance more than a millennium before the Gospels. Long before Jesus, the psalmist referred to this first heavenly food as the "bread of the angels" (Psalm 78:25). Let's join the people of Israel as they travel from Egypt through the wilderness to the Promised Land and are fed by the hand of God, to discover how the miraculous nature of this earlier food sheds light on the supernatural bread that Jesus will leave us at the Last Supper.



DISCUSS

[illegible]

- D. Gather enough just for one day
 - 1. Except gather twice as much on Friday in order to rest on the Sabbath
 - 2. Teaching Israelites to trust God and his provision
- E. The manna tastes like honey, as a foretaste of the Promised Land
- F. Jar of manna kept in the sanctuary throughout the generations
 - 1. Eucharist is the new manna
 - 2. Kept as a visible sign and reminder of God's provision
 - 3. Manna was a temporary miracle until arrival in Promised Land



DISCUSS

1. What was one thing that you heard for the first time or that was an “aha moment” for you in Dr. Pitre’s teaching?

2. The Israelites complain because they long for the food they ate in Egypt, even though they ate it as slaves. What do you think are some common reasons for falling back into slavery to sin? What can you do to fight against this in your life? How can you encourage someone else in this struggle this week?

3. God instructs the Israelites to gather only enough manna for one day (and a double portion before the Sabbath). How does God teach his people to trust in him and his provision with this command? How do God’s small actions in our own daily lives teach us to trust him?

PART 2—WATER FROM THE ROCK

Watch the teaching. The following is a brief outline of the topics covered in the video teaching.

I. Water from the rock at Horeb (Exodus 17)

- A. Israelites complain about being thirsty, accuse Moses of bringing them into the wilderness to die
- B. God instructs Moses to strike the rock and bring forth water
- C. 1 Corinthians 10:1–5
 - 1. St. Paul uses the Exodus to explain the Christian practice of Eucharistic communion
 - 2. The rock in the wilderness was Christ

II. Water from the rock at Kadesh (Numbers 20)

- A. Second instance of complaining because of thirst
- B. God instructs Moses to “speak” to the rock and bring forth water, but Moses “strikes” the rock
- C. God punishes Moses “because you did not believe in me”
 - 1. Moses will not be allowed to enter the Promised Land
 - 2. God accuses Moses of a lack of faith
- D. The rock is Christ
 - 1. Blood and water flow from Christ’s side on the cross
 - 2. Christ is only sacrificed once; the rock has already been struck; after that the one sacrifice is made present through the power of the word
 - 3. In his lack of faith, Moses obscures the typology of this event
 - 4. Jewish rabbinic commentary on Exodus says blood and water came forth when Moses struck the rock
 - 5. Eucharist, as fulfillment of these miraculous types, must also be miraculous

DISCUSS

4. What was one thing that you heard for the first time or that was an “aha moment” for you in Dr. Pitre’s teaching?

5. When the Israelites get thirsty, they accuse Moses of bringing them out into the wilderness to die. When have you found God's plan hard to understand? How did you react? What helped you get through?

6. Moses calls the place where this occurs "Massah" and "Meribah," because the Israelites put God to the test. What do you think is the difference between "struggling with faith" and "putting God to the test"? What advice would you give to someone testing God like the Israelites did?

7. According to Dr. Pitre, why is Moses punished so severely for striking the rock? Along with a position of leadership comes responsibility. How is this true today for leaders both in and outside the Church? How do leaders' good examples inspire the people they lead? How do their bad examples harm the people they lead? How can we help strengthen the leaders in our lives?

"You see the mystery. Moses is the prophet; the rod is the word of God. The priest strikes the rock with the word of God: the water flows and the people of God drink. And the priest touches the cup, waters streams into the cup, springing up to eternal life."

—St. Ambrose, On the Sacraments 5:1; see J. Danielou, *The Bible and the Liturgy*, 194

"The remembrance of the manna in the desert will always recall to Israel that it lives by the bread of the Word of God; their daily bread is the fruit of the promised land, the pledge of God's faithfulness to his promises."

—CCC 1334

MEMORY VERSE

“And he rained down upon them manna to eat, and gave them the grain of heaven. Man ate of the bread of the angels; he sent them food in abundance.”
—Psalm 78:24–25



CLOSING PRAYER

Lord Jesus Christ, you are constantly by our side, sustaining us on our journey. Help us to be more aware of your presence, to turn to you in our need, and to live our lives in such a way that we help strengthen the faith of those around us. Amen.

FOR FURTHER READING

Brant Pitre, *Jesus and the Jewish Roots of the Eucharist*, Chapter 4: “The Manna of the Messiah” (Doubleday, 2011)



Moses drawing water from the rock / Erich Lessing / Art Resource, NY

COMMIT – DAY 1

FROM THE ROCK



Water plays a central role throughout the story of salvation history. At the very beginning of creation, the Spirit of God moves over the waters. God sends the waters of the flood to cleanse the earth. The patriarchs meet their wives at wells. God parts the waters of the Red Sea to deliver his people from Egypt, and forty years later he stops the flow of the Jordan River to allow them to cross into the Promised Land.

In the New Testament we find many references to water as well. Before he begins his public ministry, Jesus is baptized by John the Baptist in the Jordan River. In his first public miracle, Jesus turns water into wine at the wedding feast at Cana. On the cross, blood and water flow from Jesus' side when the soldier's spear pierces his chest.



Baptism of the Lord © Zvonimir Atletic / shutterstock.com

What image or story of water in the Bible is most familiar to you? Why is water important in that story?

In Scripture, water is important both spiritually and physically. It is a sign of creation and rebirth. Abundant rains at the proper times are a sign of God's favor, while drought is one of the curses listed in Deuteronomy for breaking the covenant (see Deuteronomy 28:15–24). In a very real way, water holds the power of life and death.



Moses drawing water from a rock / Mondadori Portfolio / Electa / Art Resource, NY

We see this life-or-death importance of water clearly in the story of God providing water from the rock at Horeb. Read Exodus 17:1–7, and answer the following questions. Who decides that the Israelites should move from the wilderness of Sin to Rephidim? Whom do the Israelites blame for this decision?

How do the Israelites react to the lack of water? How does Moses react to the complaints of the Israelites? What is God's response?

When have you lacked something? How did God provide? Did his provision look different from what you expected?

This episode takes place about three months after the Israelites leave Egypt. Take a look at the story of their journey, beginning with their departure from Egypt through their arrival in the wilderness of Sin in the following passages, and fill in the chart with all the miracles the Israelites have witnessed in this short time.

	Danger	God's Provision
Exodus 12:33–36		
Exodus 13:21–22		
Exodus 14:1–25		
Exodus 14:26–30		
Exodus 15:22–25		
Exodus 16:1–4		



The Israelites Crossing the Red Sea. Roman sarcophagus / Berlin / Manastirne / Alfredo Dagli Orti/ Art Resource, NY

When the Israelites, with their backs pinned against the Red Sea, see Pharaoh's army and charioteers driving toward them, they cry out to Moses in fear, who responds:

"Fear not, stand firm, and see the salvation of the LORD, which he will work for you today... The LORD will fight for you, and you have only to be still." —Exodus 14:13–14

And the Lord does fight for them, splitting the sea and providing their route of escape. Over and over again, God provides for the needs of his people. The theme of God's provision runs throughout the Exodus narrative and wilderness wanderings. From guidance and safety to food and water, no need is too small or too large for God.

And yet, the needs continue to present themselves. God brings his people out of Israel with riches and huge herds of cattle, but they complain of hunger. God sweetens the water at Marah, and two chapters later the Israelites are thirsty again. Although God provides, there is always a new need to be met. Why do you think God told the Israelites to camp at Rephidim when there was no water there? Why didn't he just send them somewhere with water (as he did in Exodus 15:27)? Why did he let them experience that need?

Sometimes God uses prayer to make us aware of what we truly need. Jesus tells us, "Ask, and it will be given you" (Matthew 7:7). Asking is a crucial part of the process. When Jesus encounters blind Bartimaeus at Jericho, he doesn't simply restore his sight. First he inquires, "What do you want me to do for you?" (Mark 10:51). Although God knows our needs, just as he knew the Israelites would need water on their journey, he wants us to recognize our needs and bring them to him.

Take some time in prayer today to bring all your needs before God. Ask God to open your eyes to see his provision.

COMMIT – DAY 2

“TELL THE ROCK”: TRUST IN GOD



Do you ever feel like God is asking you to do something crazy? Maybe it's something big, like moving across the country or taking a new job that pays less. Maybe it's something smaller but still outside your comfort zone, like volunteering to teach a religious education class at your parish or inviting a co-worker to come to Mass with you. Sometimes when God asks something of us, we can't always see the whole picture. From our point of view, his request might not make a

lot of sense. What do we do when faced with those strange instructions from God? Do we take a leap of faith and obey, or do we do things our way because it's easier or more comfortable?

Have you ever felt like God was calling you to do something you couldn't understand? What did you do? How did it turn out?

Moses must have had many such moments, starting with his encounter with the Lord at the burning bush (see Exodus 3–4). The story of the Exodus is full of God giving Moses instructions that sound a little crazy from our human perspective. Look up the following passages. What are some of the things God tells Moses to do?

Exodus 3:10 _____

Exodus 7:15–18 _____

Exodus 14:16 _____

Exodus 15:25 _____

Exodus 17:5–6 _____

In each of these instances, God tells Moses to do something that doesn't make sense on the surface. Go back to a country where he is wanted for murder and tell the most powerful king on earth to release thousands of his slaves? Use his staff to make water do completely unnatural things? Make bitter water fit for drinking? Bring water out of a rock? And yet, Moses obeys. At each request of God, Moses steps out in faith (albeit after a little arguing in some cases; see Exodus 3:13 and 4:1, 10, for example), and God is able to work his miracles through Moses.

Reread Exodus 17:1–7, where God has Moses strike the rock to provide water for Israel. Next read the second account of God providing water from a rock, in Numbers 20:1–13. What are some of the similarities between Numbers 20:1–13 and Exodus 17:1–7?

What are some of the differences? What is the most significant difference in the account in Numbers?

This time, Moses stumbles. God told him to “speak” to the rock, and instead Moses strikes it. Twice. He disobeys. Maybe he's angry—and who wouldn't be? It seems like all the Israelites ever do is grumble and complain. At every step, God provides. And at every step they murmur and groan and accuse Moses of being out to get them. His anger would certainly be understandable, and perhaps we get a taste of it in his opening words to the assembled Israelites: “Hear now, you rebels” (Numbers 20:10).

But whether or not Moses strikes the rock in anger, his real sin is revealed in the words God speaks to him afterward. Read Numbers 20:12 again. According to the Lord, where did Moses fail?

This failure is two-fold. God said, “Tell the rock,” but Moses felt he had to do something in addition to that. God identifies Moses' fault: “Because you did not believe in me...” Moses did not believe that what God said would actually happen. Instead Moses wanted to do what was familiar, what had worked in the past.

Moses sins not only against God, but against the whole assembly that God has entrusted to him. When he fails to “sanctify” God “in the eyes of the sons of Israel,” Moses misses a chance to strengthen the wavering faith of the Israelites. How do Moses' words and actions miss the full potential to strengthen the faith of the Israelites here?

Through his sin, as Dr. Pitre said in his teaching, Moses interfered with the typology of this event. When he deviated from God's plan and instead followed his own, he changed the incident in such a way that it was no longer the kind of foreshadowing of Christ that God had intended it to be. Only after Jesus' fulfillment would St. Paul write of the original intended foreshadowing to the Corinthians, saying:

"And all drank the same supernatural drink. For they drank from the supernatural Rock which followed them, and the Rock was Christ."
—1 Corinthians 10:4

Why does St. Paul say that "the Rock was Christ"? Look up the following passages to illustrate how the rock is a type of Christ.

John 7:37 _____

John 19:34 _____

Hebrews 10:10 _____

Moses was called to live a life of radical trust. We can be encouraged by his successes, and warned by his failure in Numbers 20. In what areas is God calling you to a more radical trust in him?



The Christ Pantokrator. Cathedral-Basilica of Cefalu (c) VLADJ55 / shutterstock.com

COMMIT—DAY 3

LECTIO: THE MIRACLE OF THE MANNA



It is not long before the hardships of their journey in the wilderness have the Israelites regretting their departure from Egypt. Although they were slaves, they remember longingly the food available there. Hungry and afraid, they murmur against Moses. Despite their ingratitude, God responds to the needs of his people by providing for them an abundance of miraculous food.

LECTIO: The practice of praying with Scripture, *lectio divina*, begins with an active and close reading of the Scripture passage. Read the verse below and then answer the questions to take a closer look at some of the details of the passage.

“Then the LORD said to Moses, ‘Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a day’s portion every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law or not. On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily.’ So Moses and Aaron said to all the people of Israel, ‘At evening you shall know that it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your murmurings against the LORD. For what are we, that you murmur against us?’ And Moses said, ‘When the LORD gives you in the evening flesh to eat and in the morning bread to the full, because the LORD has heard your murmurings which you murmur against him—what are we? Your murmurings are not against us but against the LORD.’” —Exodus 16:4–8

What are the two parts of the miracle of the manna?

What guidelines are the people to follow when gathering the manna?

What do you think it would have been like to see and taste the manna for the first time?

According to the narrative, the provision of the manna serves multiple purposes, both physical and spiritual. What are they?

MEDITATIO: *Lectio*, close reading and rereading, is followed by *meditatio*, time to reflect on the Scripture passage, to ponder the reason for particular events, descriptions, details, phrases, and even echoes from other Scripture passages that were noticed during *lectio*. Take some time now to meditate on Exodus 16:4-8. Use the following reflection and questions to help you begin your meditation.

It must have been hard to get up each morning and walk all day, journeying to an unknown destination. In Egypt, life had been predictable and everything was familiar. Yes, the Israelites had been slaves, and the work had been difficult—especially in those last weeks since Moses had returned and started arguing with Pharaoh. But there had always been food to eat. And not just bread, but meat, too. Now, in the wilderness, there is hunger. With all the heat, exhaustion, and uncertainty, suddenly the memories of slavery in Egypt aren't so bad. The memories of work and oppression dim in comparison to the memories of plentiful food. As people continue to talk about the food they had in Egypt and how hungry they are now, some start to mutter that it would have been better to die in Egypt. Is there a worse way to die than by starvation? Better to have been killed by God along with the first-born of the Egyptians than to die of starvation in the desert! A few people suggest that maybe this is no accident; maybe Moses meant for them to all starve to death out here so that he could take the spoils of Egypt. Pretty soon everyone is murmuring against Moses and Aaron: their leaders took them away from the fleshpots of Egypt and brought them out here to starve in the desert.

The next morning, Moses gathers the people, telling them that this very evening there will be meat for them to eat; God has heard their complaints and will provide flesh in the evening and bread in the morning. This miraculous provision demonstrates to the Israelites yet again the glory of their God who brought them out of Egypt. But they must only gather enough bread for each day, and a double portion the day before the Sabbath. They have been starving, but they must trust God to give them what they need “every day.”



Place yourself in this scene. As an Israelite, how would you feel to be wandering, hot, tired, and hungry in the wilderness? Would it be better or worse than being a slave in Egypt? Why?


Moses brings forth water from rock and manna from desert /
Alfredo Dagli Orti / The Art Archive at Art Resource, NY

Israel has been traveling for some time, moving from the Red Sea through the wilderness of Shur, to Marah, to Elim, and now to the wilderness of Sin. Why do the Israelites complain now of hunger? Why do you think the Israelites respond to their hunger in the desert by accusing Moses and Aaron, and God, of wishing them harm? How do you, at times, blame God or others without first taking time to recognize your own fault?

God has already performed a multitude of miracles for the Israelites, including the ten plagues in Egypt, the parting of the Red Sea and the destruction of Pharaoh's army, and a miraculous sweetening of bitter water at Marah. Why does Israel find it so hard to turn to God in trust? Has there been a time in your life when you missed an opportunity to trust in God and instead reacted out of your fear or hurt? What did you learn from that experience? How is God calling you to trust him in the circumstances of your life?

Israel was to collect manna "every day." When Jesus teaches his disciples to pray, one of the petitions is to ask the Father to "give us this day our daily bread" (see Matthew 6:11 or Luke 11:3). Why is it so important for us to call out to our heavenly Father "every day"?

Having read and meditated on today's Scripture passage, take some time to bring your thoughts to God (*oratio*) and to listen to God (*contemplation*). Then end your prayer by making a simple concrete resolution (*resolutio*) to respond to God's prompting of your heart in today's prayer.

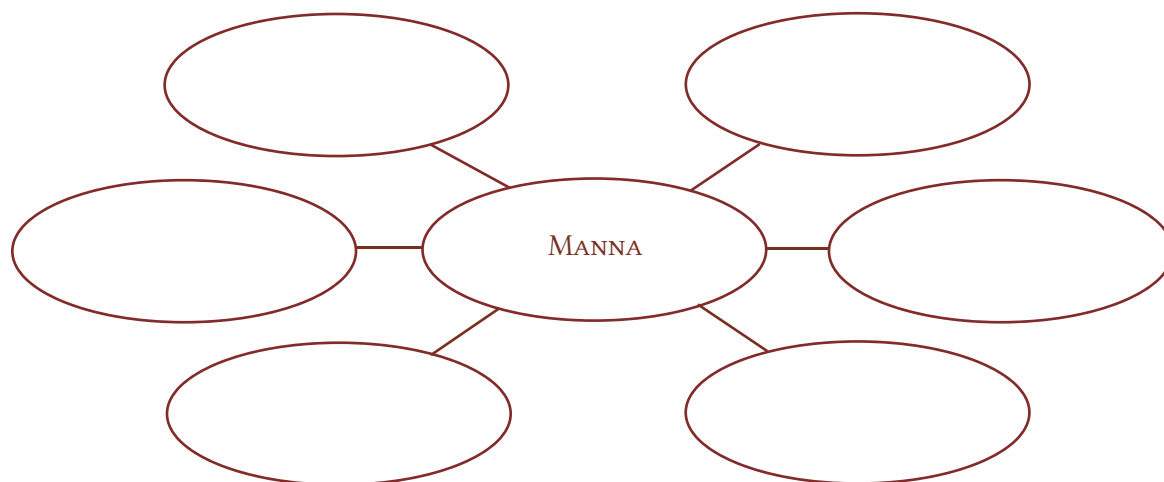


COMMIT—DAY 4

“MAN-HU?” (“WHAT IS IT?”)

Trying a new food is an exciting and delightful experience for some people; others may prefer to stick with familiar favorites. For the Israelites, the manna was the epitome of a new food: it wasn't just something new to them, but it was something that had never been seen or tasted by anyone before. As Dr. Pitre pointed out in his teaching, the very name the Israelites had given this bread from heaven indicates that it was something mysterious to them: *man-hu*, meaning “What is it?” (Exodus 16:15).

Use what you know and have learned about manna to fill in the word web below. Feel free to add extra lines to record additional observations about manna. Reread Exodus 16, Psalm 78, or Wisdom 16:20–21 if you need a review.



According to the ancient Jewish apocalyptic work 2 Baruch 29:3–8, when the messiah came there would also be a new dispensation of manna from heaven to feed the righteous. This expectation went hand-in-hand with the promise of a new prophet like Moses in Deuteronomy 18:15, 18. The first-century Jews expected a messiah who would be a new Moses and feed them with a new manna.

It is against this backdrop of messianic expectations that Jesus teaches his disciples to ask the Father to “give us this day our daily bread” (Matthew 6:11). The Greek word generally translated as “daily” is *epiousios*, literally “supersubstantial” or “supernatural.” Jesus taught his disciples to ask God not only to meet their everyday needs, but to provide for them the new supernatural bread, the new manna. How does your study of Exodus 16 and the expectation for a new manna change or deepen your understanding of the Our Father?

This same set of messianic expectations provides the context for Jesus' Bread of Life discourse in John 6. Look up the following references to manna in John 6. What are the Jews asking for? What does Jesus say about himself in response?

John 6:31–34 _____

John 6:35, 38 _____

John 6:41 _____

John 6:48–51, 58 _____

Jesus teaches that he is the new bread from heaven. The manna of the Exodus was the type, the foreshadowing; the Eucharist is the fulfillment.

“It is on this harmony of the two Testaments that the Paschal catechesis of the Lord is built.... This catechesis unveils what lay hidden under the letter of the Old Testament: the mystery of Christ. It is called ‘typological’ because it reveals the newness of Christ on the basis of the ‘figures’ (types) which announce him in the deeds, words, and symbols of the first covenant. By this re-reading in the Spirit of Truth, starting from Christ, the figures are unveiled. Thus... manna in the desert prefigured the Eucharist, ‘the true bread from heaven.’” —CCC 1094

How many parallels between the Old Testament manna and the new manna of the Eucharist can you list?

The Wisdom of Solomon, written for the Jewish community in Alexandria in the first or second century BC, reflects on the miracles of the Exodus. About the miracle of the manna, it says:

“Thou didst give people food of angels, and without their toil thou didst supply them from heaven with bread ready to eat, providing every pleasure and suited to every taste. For thy sustenance manifested thy sweetness toward thy children; and the bread, ministering to the desire of the one who took it, was changed to suit every one’s liking.”

—Wisdom 16:20–21



Hands of priest by the mass © Renata Sedmakova / shutterstock.com

Reflect on this passage. How do these words apply also to the Eucharist? How does the Eucharist manifest God's sweetness toward his children?

COMMIT—DAY 5

TRUTH AND BEAUTY

The Manna from Heaven, Pomponio Amalteo



The Manna from Heaven / Alfredo Dagli Orti / The Art Archive at Art Resource, NY

Pomponio Amalteo's *The Manna from Heaven* hangs today in the Civic Museum of Udine, northeast of Venice. Pomponio Amalteo was an Italian painter and part of the Venetian School that thrived from the mid-fifteenth to early-seventeenth century. During this time Venice was a major port and a prosperous republic, and the city was home to numerous artists, including sculptors, woodworkers, glassmakers, and painters.

What set the Venetian School of painting apart from other cities was its use of color, and the interplay between color and light. As art historian John Ruskin noted, “The Venetians are separate from other schools by rightness, and they are so to their last days....In their early days, the colorists are separated from other schools by their contentment with tranquil cheerfulness of light: by their never wanting to be dazzled. None of their lights are flashing or blinding; they are soft, winning, precious; lights of pearl, not of lime: only, you know, on this condition they cannot have sunshine: their day is the day of Paradise; they need no candle, neither light of the sun, in their cities; and everything is seen clear, as through crystal, far or near.” While Pomponio Amalteo was not one of the top masters of the Venetian School, *The Manna from Heaven* puts on display the wonderful use of color for which this school is known.

The work recounts the events of Exodus 16. Israel has only recently witnessed the mighty deeds of God—turning of the Nile into blood, the plagues against Egypt, Israel’s exodus out of slavery, and the parting of the Red Sea. Now alone in the wilderness and separated from Egypt by the same sea that decimated the Egyptian army, Israel begins to question whether God is really able to provide for the journey ahead. Israel murmurs against God and Moses saying, “Would that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate bread to the full; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger” (Exodus 16:3). God responds by sending them bread from heaven. Look up the following verses. How will God send this new food to the Israelites? And what does it look like?

Exodus 16:4 _____

Exodus 16:31 _____

Pomponio Amalteo shows us the “raining down” of God’s heavenly food, darkening the clouds at the upper edge of the painting as if a spring storm were to deluge the people with water. Instead of clear raindrops, white bits of manna descend from the clouds. Containers of all shapes, sizes, and colors—bronze pots, golden plates and cups, even a stretched out cloth—are set on the ground or raised to heaven to collect the precious food.

The crowd collecting manna includes naked children, and men and woman of all ages dressed in robes of a multitude of subtle, rich colors. On the right side of the picture stands a woman robed in a deep, vibrant blue holding her infant closely, lovingly looking into the infant’s face. The mother almost looks as if she might be feeding her infant. This mother’s tender care of her child is a beautiful image of the loving attention with which God cares for his children, Israel, as he feeds them with the bread of angels. Additionally, this “woman and child” mingled among God’s people hints to the viewer of the messiah that God will send to be the true bread from heaven.



The Manna from Heaven / Alfredo Dagli Orti / The Art Archive at Art Resource, NY

Look up the following verses. Where is Israel when God provides for the people’s hunger?

Exodus 15:22 _____

Exodus 16:2 _____

While some locations, such as Elim, provide Israel water, Exodus typically doesn't describe "the wilderness" as one of these places. But Pomponio Amalteo adorns the wilderness ground upon which Israel finds itself with a beautiful green carpet, the type of terrain where one would expect to find plentiful food. This beautiful use of color hints to the viewer that even in the midst of their wilderness journey, God will provide for his people until they arrive at the Promised Land filled with milk and honey.

Having just fled Egypt, God's people are on their way to Mt. Sinai, and, from there, to the Promised Land. That Israel is on a journey is evident from the colored tents that line the right side of the painting. At Mt. Sinai, Israel will encounter the one true God who has brought them "out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage" (Exodus 20:2). In the following verses, what will the Israelites see when they look to the mountain where God comes down to meet Moses?

Exodus 19:18 _____

Exodus 24:17 _____

In contrast to the darkened clouds in the painting's upper foreground, in the distance softly shines what appears to be the morning light in the east. No sun is visible, so the light's source is uncertain. Is it the morning light of day? Or is it the fire and lightning of God's presence on Mount Sinai in the distance?

God's provision of the manna helped the Israelites on their journey to Mount Sinai, where Moses would speak with the Lord face to face, and from there to the Promised Land, where the Lord would dwell in his Temple among his people. So too the Eucharist, the true heavenly bread, nourishes us as we journey toward heaven, the dwelling place of him who is a consuming fire, where we will meet the Lord face to face and dwell with him forever.
