

Chapter Four: THE MANNA OF EXODUS SIXTEEN

To further substantiate that the weekly Sabbath appointment occurs after the six working days, not counting the new moon, we will look at one particular example in Scripture which calculates for the Sabbath to fall on the 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th days of the month. So far we have seen at least *one* example from the Sabbath in the book of Genesis. This one example counts for a total of four Sabbaths by the moon. It will be thrilling to see that the same holds true in Exodus 16.

Exodus 16 is quite a chapter in the realm of Biblical accounts. This story has been heralded down through the ages most specifically because of the miraculous occurrence of the giving of manna from heaven by the hand of the Almighty. For people in the world who honor the fourth commandment, this chapter portrays at least one other great occurrence. That is, the revealing of the Sabbath day to the children of Israel. The book of Nehemiah tells us that YHWH revealed the Sabbath to Moses in the wilderness at this scene of the giving of the manna.

Thou camest down also upon mount Sinai, and spakest with them from heaven, and gavest them right judgments, and true laws, good statutes and commandments: **And madest known unto them thy holy Sabbath**, and commandedst them precepts, statutes, and laws, by the hand of Moses thy servant: And gavest them bread from heaven for their hunger, and broughtest forth water for them out of the rock for their thirst, and promisedst them that they should go in to possess the land which thou hadst sworn to give them. [Nehemiah 9:13-15]

Seeing that the children of Israel had been in captivity to the Egyptians for many years, a resurgence of some degree had to take place in their religious devotion to YHWH. One such thing to be restored was the weekly day of rest, the day that had been blessed in the book of Genesis. We need to ask ourselves in reading Exodus 16 this question: how exactly did YHWH make His Sabbath known to Moses and the rest of the children of Israel? We begin our search in Exodus 16:1.

And they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came unto the wilderness of Sin, which *is* between Elim and Sinai, **on the fifteenth day of the second month** after their departing out of the land of Egypt.

There are not many dates in Scripture that YHWH specifically spells out for us, but here in a chapter that is specifically about the *when* of the weekly Sabbath day, we have the spelling out of the 15th day of the second month. For us to say this is just thrown into the text at random would be illogical at best, but for us to realize that this date is specifically mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, *for a purpose*, would be in line with proper Biblical hermeneutics. YHWH here is giving us a point of origin. He is telling us what was taking place in the Israelites journeys *at this time* in their history, and He is giving us *a specific date* so as to enable us to calculate *a specific period of time*. This is not just an arbitrary giving by YHWH in His Word, but rather a *source* for us to center in on.

Before moving on, we should note that there are some who have attempted to say that the Israelites were traveling on the 15th, because of Exodus 16:1. This, in their estimation, disproves the entire notion that the 15th could have in any way been a weekly Sabbath. On the weekly Sabbath, they reason, journeying or traveling would be prohibited. While we do not believe such a prohibition covers all cases, we do feel that if the text bore out here that traveling was done on the 15th it would be an indication that a Sabbath day was not taking place. However, the text does not give us such an understanding. In looking at both the Hebrew Masoretic text of Scripture and the ancient Greek Septuagint translation (LXX), we see that what occurred on the 15th day of the second moon was the *murmuring* of the children of Israel, not the traveling.

And they departed from Aelim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came to the wilderness of sin, which is between Aelim and Sinai; **and on the fifteenth day, in the second month after their departure from the land of Egypt, all the congregation of the children of Israel murmured** against Moses. [Exodus 16:1 LXX]

One work we have consulted gives us witness that the Hebrew (Masoretic) Text actually portrays the same meaning as the Septuagint.

The presence of a major logical pause between the verb “came” and the words “on the fifteenth day” verifies this fact. This logical pause is denoted by the use of the *amah*, which resembles an upside down “v”, under the Hebrew word for Sinai... The presence of the logical pause in Exodus 16:1 shows that Israel had come to the wilderness of sin and made camp by the beginning of the fifteenth day.¹

Realizing this from both the Hebrew and Greek Scriptures, we see that there is no justification for those who insist that some type of strenuous traveling took place on the 15th day of the second month. Thus, we should look elsewhere for the reason of this particular day of the moon being mentioned in a chapter that deals with Sabbath observance. Exodus 16:4-5 gives us the response to the Israelites murmurings.

Then said YHWH unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no. And it shall come to pass, that on the sixth day they shall prepare *that* which they bring in; and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily.

Here we see that YHWH is going to rain bread from heaven for the Israelites and the verses are very specific in saying that every day the children of Israel will go out and gather the bread. For a total of six days, this was to be done. On the sixth day, they are to prepare that bread which they bring in, and it will be twice as much as they gather daily. Something of interest to point out here is that at the beginning of the chapter there is no mention of them actually gathering double the amount of bread, but rather that after they prepare it, it would *be* twice as much. That is, YHWH would miraculously multiply the bread He rained from heaven. Their only obligation was to

¹ *The Christian Passover*, by Fred R. Coulter, p. 407-409 1993, 1999 York Publishing Co. | P.O. Box 1038 Hollister, CA 95024.

gather it for six days. The significance of this multiplying will soon become apparent. Exodus 16:6-7a then has Moses and Aaron saying:

And Moses and Aaron said unto all the children of Israel, At even, then ye shall know that YHWH hath brought you out from the land of Egypt: And in the morning, then ye shall see the glory of YHWH; for that he heareth your murmurings against YHWH: and what *are* we, that ye murmur against us?

The understanding of the mentioning of this evening and morning is found further down in verses 11-13.

And YHWH spake unto Moses, saying, I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel: speak unto them, saying, At even ye shall eat flesh, and in the morning ye shall be filled with bread; and ye shall know that I *am* YHWH your Mighty One. And it came to pass, that at even the quails came up, and covered the camp: and in the morning the dew lay round about the host.

Verse 6 has Moses and Aaron telling the people that they would know YHWH has brought them out of the land of Egypt, and this has to do with the quail that are mentioned in verse 12 of this same chapter.

Before we move on to the bread from heaven, we should take a moment to comment on the quail that were to be given at evening. The reason for this is that the Hebrew text of verse 12 for evening reads *ben ha erebim* literally, *between or twixt the evenings*. Now, we do have those who would point out to us that this period is somewhere around what we know as 3:00 p.m. and thus the quail came at 3:00 p.m. on the 15th day of the second month, something that would not have occurred had the 15th day been a weekly Sabbath day. Is there merit to this claim? Here is something to consider.

In this chapter, the Father is going to prove them as to whether they will keep His law or not. Exodus 16:4 states that YHWH is going to give them a certain rate of manna every day for six days, and on the sixth day it would be twice as much (vs. 5) because on the Sabbath, there would be none (vs. 26). When you are teaching your children right from wrong, you do not set a bad example from the start, that is contrary to what you are teaching. Raining down quail on the holy Sabbath for the children to gather on that day to clean and cook, and then telling them not to even gather manna on the Sabbath day is not what the Father did or taught. There is another understanding to glean from the phrase "between the evenings" in verse six. Moses and Aaron both said that at evening (ereb) YHWH shall give flesh to eat (at night), and in the morning bread to the full.

Notice He said morning and not morrow (next day). These are two different English and Hebrew wordings. Morning is the same day as the evening which began the day (evening and morning), while morrow is the following day (tomorrow). Read verse 13, "And it came to pass at even (16th) the quail came up and covered the ground and in the morning (still the 16th) dew lay round about the host." These points do not contradict verse 12 where the Father said He heard the murmurings (on the 15th) of the children of Israel: "Speak unto them saying, at evening (between the evenings), ye shall eat flesh,

and in the morning (still between the same evening at daylight) ye shall be filled with bread." Now you have a choice. Either the quail was given on the 15th or not. One of the two choices makes the Father work on the Sabbath (as we shall see) and causes the children to work instead of rest. The second of the two choices (between the two evenings) the quail and manna would occur both on the same day (16th) as the meaning of the word infers.

The Passover was indeed to be slain on the 14th "between the evenings," and Deuteronomy 16 specifies this as, "...at the going down of the sun." Here is another specific time, as the sun starts its downward stroke after the apex on the 14th, around what we would call 3 p.m. Another specific time of "between the evenings" is the morning and evening sacrifices, where both lambs were sacrificed on the same day, the first in the morning, and the second one at evening (between the evenings). In Exodus 16, the period of "between the evenings" is specified as occurring before morning, and is on the same day as the giving of the manna, the 16th.

To further confirm what we have stated thus far, we can know that the weekly Sabbath was on the 15th day of the second month because of the raining of the bread. Remember, the bread was *first* given in the *morning*, the morning of the 16th (Exodus 16:1, 4-5, 13). We also know that it came for six consecutive days from verses 4-5. When we count consecutively, we arrive here:

- 16th = first day of manna
- 17th = second day of manna
- 18th = third day of manna
- 19th = fourth day of manna
- 20th = fifth day of manna
- 21st = sixth day of manna
- 22nd = seventh day Sabbath

Knowing that the bread began on the 16th and lasted for six days *causes us to know for certain* that the Sabbath day occurred on the 22nd of the month, which in turn would have to mean that the 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th days were Sabbaths as well. We now begin to see why YHWH specifically mentioned the 15th day of the month at the very beginning of the narrative.

Here we come to yet *another* rebuttal given by critics of this method of Sabbath reckoning, and that is the giving and preparing of the manna. Notice Exodus 16:29.

See, for that YHWH hath given you the Sabbath, therefore he giveth you on the sixth day the bread of two days; abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh day.

Critics point out here that there is no mention of a stopping at the time of the new moon, and that the text simply says YHWH gives the bread of *two* days for the Sabbath day. This takes us back to verse 5 of the chapter, to a point we mentioned would become apparent in further examination the text. Remember, the children of Israel did

not gather a double portion on the sixth day, they prepared what they brought in and it *would be* twice as much. Some may object by pointing us to verse 22.

And it came to pass, *that* on the sixth day they gathered twice as much bread, two omers for one *man*: and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses.

At this point in the chapter, readers automatically think that the Israelites purposefully gathered twice as much bread on the sixth day, forgetting what YHWH said would occur on this same sixth day back in verse 5 of the chapter. The interesting point to note in verse 22 is the fact that the rulers or elders of the congregation *came and told Moses* about what happened on the sixth day with the bread. Why come and tell Moses if the children had literally gathered twice as much? This point gives evidence that the rulers saw the *miracle* YHWH had spoken of in verse 5, and thus came and told Moses what was happening. The bread was multiplying as the Israelites prepared it! The point of this is that in the case of there being a Sabbath, YHWH made it possible for the bread to last for two consecutive days by the action of a miracle.

In the case of verse 29, the understanding would be that YHWH gave them the bread of two days seeing the text is specifically pointing us toward the Sabbath of the 22nd day of the month. However, the Hebrew text of verse 29 does not use the Hebrew word for two (*sheniy*) but rather just reads the bread of days, plural.² This phrase in Hebrew accounts for more than just two consecutive days of bread provided miraculously, and it could in fact be days innumerable, for nothing is impossible with YHWH. This is a very clear and concise answer to those critics who attempt to evade the issue by saying, "What about the new moon?" The fact of the matter is that YHWH would have no problem giving the children of Israel the "bread of days" on preparation day just as the inspired Hebrew text states in Exodus 16:29. Furthermore, the lack of an exception being mentioned is not proof that there was not an exception for the day of the new moon. I might give as an example the Day of Atonement. This day came year after year for 40 years. Did YHWH just stop the manna on this day? The Bible doesn't say that He did, does it? Below is a possible scenario of the 7th moon in the wilderness using the Saturday Sabbatarian model.

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4 NM	5	6	7 SAB
8	9	10	11	12	13 FAST	14 SAB
15	16	17	18	19	20	21 SAB
22	23	24	25	26	27	28 SAB
29	30					

Using this scenario what did YHWH do when raining down the manna in the wilderness. Did he stop the manna on the 10th day of the 7th month? It seems Saturday

² The Hebrew text reads *lechem yomim* which is literally "bread days" with no mention of a numerical amount to the plural word days (*yomim*).

Sabbatarians do not deal with questions as these while demanding that we deal with their question regarding the new moon.

The opposition to lunar Sabbaths which comes from those of a different persuasion is not opposition at all seeing there is a logical, Scriptural answer for their rebuttals when the totality of the Exodus 16 passage is taken into serious consideration.

We can safely conclude that the 15th day of the second month was a weekly Sabbath, causing the Sabbaths in that month to fall on the 8th, 15th, 22nd, and 29th days of the second month. However, this is not where the evidence ends, but rather only where it begins.