

The Gift of God's Glory

Rev. W. Harinck – Exodus 16:7

Singing: Psalter 225

Reading: Exodus 16:1-18

Singing: Psalter 289

Singing: Psalter 290

Singing: Psalter 292

Congregation, our text for this (morning/evening) hour is from the chapter we have read, Exodus 16, verse 7, the first part of verse 7. Exodus 16, the first part of verse 7, where we read the word of God and our text, *"And in the morning then ye shall see the glory of the Lord."*

The text speaks about:

The Gift of God's Glory and we draw your attention to these three points:

1. Not Deserved by Man;
2. From Heaven for Man; and
3. For the Humiliation of Man.

The final verses of the preceding chapter describe how the people of Israel arrived at Elim, an oasis in the desert, a small Paradise amidst the wilderness. There, they found water, trees, and fruits, along with comforting shade. Elim became a source of refreshment and joy for the people of Israel. It served as a glimpse, a foretaste if you will, of the promised land, Canaan. It was a place of peace and rest.

After a while, the Lord told the people of Israel to resume their journey towards their ultimate destination: the promised land. Once more, the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire emerged to lead them, directing their path into the remote wilderness known as the wilderness of Sin. This barren and harsh terrain presented challenges, with scorching heat during the day and chilling cold at night.

It had been thirty days since their departure from Egypt, and now they found themselves facing a shortage of food for both themselves and their cattle. Despite carrying supplies from Egypt, their provisions were spent, leaving them in a desperate situation. As they crossed the barren desert, there was no sustenance available for either humans or animals.

Indeed, the people of Israel find themselves in a truly difficult situation. Their need for sustenance has reached such a critical level that they fear they may perish from hunger.

And congregation, in that dreadful situation, what will the people of Israel do? In that great hour of need, when the fear of hunger and starvation looms over them, will they humble themselves and fall to their knees, calling upon the Lord their God? The very God who had delivered them from Egypt, from the house of bondage, making a miraculous pathway through the waters of the Red Sea. Will they cry out to the LORD, the One who turned the bitter water of Mara into sweet and drinkable water?

We read in our chapter, verse two, "And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness." Instead of calling upon the Lord for help, they resorted to murmuring against Moses and Aaron. They placed the blame squarely on Moses and Aaron, accusing them, "You brought us into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly. If only we had stayed in Egypt, where we sat by the pots of meat and had plenty of bread."

Indeed, they appear to have completely forgotten the hardships they endured in Egypt, the bondage, the slavery, and even the tragedy of their sons being cast into the river Nile. Most notably, they seem to have lost sight of the wondrous deeds of the Lord, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, who had delivered them from the bondage of Egypt.

Indeed, congregation, it appears they have forgotten the unwavering faithfulness of the living God, His strength, and His boundless love. They seem not to recall how the Lord had spared them in the night when the angel of destruction went through Egypt and how the pillar of cloud led them by day and the pillar of fire led them through the night. They have forgotten how they had sung before the Lord at the shores of the Red Sea.

Oh, what a people! We now hear them saying, "We would have been better off staying in Egypt. If we have to die, it would have been better to die in Egypt." Oh, what a disappointing people indeed!

It shows us a picture, not just of the people of Israel, but also of you and me, congregation. It illustrates the reality of man in his fallen state. Often, we attempt to conceal our anger and rebellion from the Lord. However, here we see the true picture. When the Lord led the people of Israel in ways that defied their expectations, taking them into the wilderness, and when circumstances unfolded differently than they had desired, their response was to murmur and complain. It is in these moments that we witness the true picture of man in his fallen state. They began to murmur against the Lord.

And what shall God do with such a murmuring people? They deserve that God would keep silent, that He would hide Himself. They deserve His righteous punishment. We would expect the Lord to say to the people of Israel: "I have heard your murmurings. Now I will visit you in My anger. I will rain the fire of My wrath from heaven upon you." That would be just. That is what they deserved. Oh how will God deal with such a murmuring people?

Oh, instead - instead of pouring out His wrath and anger, He revealed His glory to them. How incomprehensible! He showed His glory to such a murmuring people! Listen to what the Lord said to Moses in verse 4: "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you," and in verse 8, "The Lord shall give you in the evening flesh to eat." How full of mercy! Oh, what lovingkindness, what marvellous grace! God, congregation, sets His grace over and against the evil of murmuring! He says, 'I will show My glory unto the people of Israel' What a sovereign favor of the Lord.

Therefore, in this history, we witness the gift of God's glory, a gift not deserved by man. It was not deserved yet God granted it unto man. The gift of God's glory from heaven for man. The promise of the Lord was as we read in our text: "*And in the morning, then ye shall see the glory of the Lord.*" Oh, try to fathom it: God's radiant glory, His majesty shining brighter than the sun! The promise speaks about a special manifestation of the glory of God.

We can contemplate God's holiness, righteousness, and majesty - all these perfections of God converge and shine forth in His glory. God's glory is the radiant expression of His holiness, righteousness, and majesty, an eternal culmination of all these attributes. They unite in the glory of God. And now, God declares, "I will show My glory." Here, in our chapter, Exodus 16, we encounter the first instance in the Bible where God unveils and displays His glory.

The Lord explained to Moses how He was going to show His glory: On the very day of rebellion and murmuring, in the evening, the Lord promised to provide meat for them to eat. And on the morning of the following day, He would abundantly provide bread. But how, congregation? That's impossible! In the barren and infertile wilderness, where even the cattle have no sustenance, how can such a large number of people, with so many mouths to feed, be provided for?

Our chapter says what happened: in verse 13, "*And it came to pass that at even the quails came up and covered the camp.*" "*The quails came up.*" The quails, a type of migratory bird, fatigued from their long journey, descended into the desert and settled amidst the people of Israel.

We believe that it was the hand of the Lord and the providence of God that guided those birds exactly to that spot, in such a larger number that there was meat enough for all of them.

Furthermore, another thing occurred: verse 13, *"And in the morning the dew lay round about the host"* and verse 14, *"and when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoarfrost on the ground."*

Oh, what a sight it must have been! As the morning dew disappeared the people of Israel beheld what they described as "a small round thing." The Hebrew term used here evokes the image of fine dust, possessing both a smooth and granular texture. In verse 31, it is further elaborated that this mysterious substance was like coriander seed, delicate and light, with a delightful taste reminiscent of wafers made with honey. And when the people of Israel saw this unusual substance lying around their tents, they were puzzled as they had never seen anything like it before. They exclaimed, *"It is manna!"* (verse 15). Manna! which translates to "What is this?" "Manna?!"

It was a supernatural gift from heaven. The people of Israel gathered the manna, and with it, they kneaded and baked loaves of bread. The manna was there every day - forty years long, day by day, bread from heaven. It was there every morning, till they arrived in the promised land.

Oh, what an inexplicable miracle! The manna was a product from heaven, meticulously produced by the living God. Therefore, congregation, the manna became a tangible expression of God's glory. In this way, His promise was fulfilled: *"And in the morning, then ye shall see the glory of God."*

The Lord Jesus Christ is the ultimate fulfillment of the manna, as revealed in Scripture and explained by Scripture. In John 6, the Lord Jesus Himself proclaims, *"Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and giveth life to the world. I am the Bread of Life."*

The Lord Jesus Christ is the manna. He is the living bread from heaven. Just as the manna came from heaven, so did the Lord Jesus Christ. While the manna did not grow in the wilderness and was not made of man, it descended from God, as a gift from heaven, coming down on the earth. And so the Lord Jesus Christ is not from this earth. He is from heaven. He descended from heaven. Scripture says that the first Adam was of the earth, earthly, but the second Adam, Jesus Christ, was the Lord from heaven.

He revealed Himself in our flesh, taking upon Himself our human nature. In doing so, He became equal to us, yet without sin. He was born in a manger and wrapped in

swaddling clothes. Oh, what a profound mystery it is! The lofty One, bending down so low, to be laid in the desert of this world.

The manna fell down in the wilderness, a heavenly bread sent from above, descending in the wilderness of Sin. Oh, what a fitting title to describe the character of the world, into which the living manna, the Lord Jesus Christ, God's only begotten Son, descended. The holy One of God came into this world, came into the desert of this sinful world. He came into this wilderness - a desolate place that evokes thoughts of homelessness and emptiness. It is a place where no one would consider dwelling or building a house. Yet, into such a place, the Lord Jesus Christ descended. He came into this world, full of sin and misery because of sin.

Due to our fall in Adam creation was plunged into darkness, cursed, and found itself under the wrath of God. However, in such a place God chose to show His glory through the sending of His beloved Son, Jesus Christ.

The manna was a small, round thing. Who could have imagined that this seemingly insignificant object was a revelation of the glory of God? Additionally, the manna serves as a symbol, a token, and a type of the Lord Jesus Christ. For who could have imagined that He was the Messiah, the promised Savior, and the Beloved of the Father? *"And when we shall see Him, there is no beauty that we should desire Him."* Yet, He is full of the revelation of the glory of God.

As the Apostle John says, *"The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."*

The Lord Jesus was that revelation of God's glory, though veiled by the curtains of His humiliation and hidden behind the veil of His humanity. The Lord Jesus showed God's glory by humbling Himself, making Himself poor, weak, and small. Just like the manna was grounded and baked, the Lord Jesus was crushed under the millstones of God's wrath because of sin. He had to obey to the point of the cross, even the death on the cross. He groaned and sighed, and in the garden of Gethsemane, He crept in the dust and His sweat turned into drops of blood.

Just as manna was ground and baked, the Lord Jesus was pressed until all was fulfilled. And on the cross, He even endured the scorching heat of God's wrath and the weight of the law's curse because of the sins and iniquities of His people. The intensity of that fire was upon Him.

Congregation, the manna also symbolized the daily need for the Israelites in the wilderness. Manna was the only food in the wilderness. When God gave the manna to the Israelites from heaven in the wilderness, it wasn't merely for them to gaze upon it. He didn't give the manna to admire it! It was God's gift meant to be eaten. It was the

only way the people of Israel could survive and live in the wilderness. It was God's gift for a needy people. Without God's provision, they would have perished in the wilderness.

Even so the Lord Jesus Christ is the true Bread of Life. He came from heaven to seek those who are lost. He is the great gift of God. In darkness God sheds light through this gift of His beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Apart from Him fallen sinners will starve to death because our precious souls can only live through that manna.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the only suitable sustenance for dying, starving sinners. As the people of the Lord travel on their pilgrimage to Zion through the desert wilderness, they live off this spiritual food, the Lord Jesus Christ. They live through this provision of God. They know by experience *"My flesh is meat indeed and My blood is drink indeed."* Oh, He truly fills the heart and the soul of the poor and the needy. True satisfaction is only in Him. He gives strength to the weak, comfort for the weary, deliverance for those who are lost.

The manna was a gift. It was a supernatural gift of God. They called it 'manna.' We saw congregation, that it is an expression of nonunderstanding. It's an expression of incomprehensibility. When God showed His glory in such a way, the people of Israel cried out, "It is manna!"

This also holds true for the Lord Jesus Christ. He is God's incomprehensible gift from heaven, the eternal One entering into time, the Creator becoming a creature, the endless One becoming ending, the living One becoming mortal man. Here we too must exclaim, "It is manna!" We see it but do not comprehend. No, we don't comprehend because He also remained what He was, the eternal One, God's only begotten Son, the living One, He who knew no sin, the righteous One, the beloved Son of the Father.

When we contemplate the Lord Jesus Christ, the Father's gift, meditating on His two natures, His threefold offices, and the preciousness of His names, when we meditate on His state of humility and His state of glory, when we ponder His position at the right hand of the Father and His eventual coming again to judge the quick and the dead, then we are compelled to exclaim, 'It is manna.' In these matters, there are no thoughts for us to fully grasp and comprehend.

Philosophy and science fall short in comprehending the greatness and preciousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. However, within the hearts of God's people, faith admires Him because of Father's eternal love, who granted the gift of His beloved Son. God sent His Son into this world to seek and save those who are lost, and through faith, we echo the cry of the people of Israel, saying 'It is manna.' This cry signifies admiration and the bestowal of honor upon the gift of God. When by the working of the Holy Spirit our hearts begin to understand a little of this preciousness of Christ, of the willingness of

this living Manna, this Bread of life, to enter into this wilderness in order to bring the glory of God even in the darkness of our sinful state, we too proclaim, 'It is manna.' *"For God's so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."* Then the Apostle Paul says, *"Thanks be unto God for His unspeakable gift."*

Let's now sing, congregation, from Psalter 290,

"Praise ye the Lord for He is good, give thanks and bless His name, His loving kindness changes not from age to age the same." Psalter 290.

The Gift of God's Glory. Not deserved by man, yet given from heaven by God for man. Therefore, the gift of God's glory is for the humiliation of man—a humbling gift, an undeserved gift. It was given freely; no payment was required to receive the manna. Working in the fields wasn't necessary to obtain it. The only thing they had to do was to gather it.

Thus, the people of Israel, during their 40 years in the wilderness, sustained themselves with bread they did not labor for. It was a daily provision from the living God, available every day except on the Sabbath. The Lord instructed Moses, Aaron, and the people of Israel that on the sixth day, they should gather a double portion, which would remain without worms. On the Sabbath, it was preserved, providing enough for everyone.

This shows us, congregation, that the people of Israel in the wilderness were entirely dependent on the Lord, relying on God's gift. It was freely given, yet received through kneeling, stooping, and bowing down. The gift didn't sprout from trees; there was no need to tiptoe to receive the gift of manna. Reaching up high wasn't necessary; instead, they needed to bow down low. Profound spiritual lessons lie within this. Each day, they had to venture out from their tents with empty hands and baskets, stooping down to gather what God had given them for free, out of grace and not by works.

The manna came to a people in need. The people of Israel were in great need. There was hunger, as we have seen, and the threat of starvation was imminent. They were a rebellious and unwilling people, and yet even to such a people, God granted the gift from heaven. It descended precisely to where the people of Israel were situated. While they were facing immediate peril, God provided from the heavens.

The first lesson for us this morning / evening is that the bread of life, the manna, was obtained by a people in need. Do we have a spiritual need in our lives? When the

Holy Spirit opens our eyes, He reveals to us our need, congregation. He makes us aware of our misery and our state of being lost. He convinces us of our spiritual poverty. It is then that we begin to recognize the lack of food for our souls. Oh, how necessary it is that the Lord opens our eyes to our need; otherwise, we will not seek that manna. What good is medicine if we are unaware of our sickness, our impending death, and our imminent starvation? Hence, we must necessarily see how great our sins and miseries are. This is the work of the Holy Spirit – to open our eyes.

Not only do we begin to see our need, but there is also another lesson we must learn: that we cannot assist ourselves in our need, that we do not possess a single penny to settle our debt, that we are incapable of raising ourselves out of these various needs. We are powerless, helpless, and utterly lost.

What a profound lesson, congregation, to see your need and acknowledge your inability to assist yourself in that need. As long as we carry stock from Egypt in our pockets, we do not feel our need for God's gift—the heavenly manna. However, when the Lord kindles a spiritual hunger within our hearts, we begin to understand the need for the bread of life. We begin to thirst after the Lord and cry out to Him. At that point, a genuine need arises in our lives—a compelling necessity. I need that bread of life; I need to find the Surety for my soul; otherwise, I will languish as a dying, famished sinner within myself. I will be eternally lost.

The gift of the manna was given freely. This imparts another lesson, congregation. The manna, the bread of life, embodied in the Lord Jesus, cannot be earned by human effort. He becomes our portion only when we bow down before the Lord in our emptiness, acknowledging our unworthiness as lost and undone sinners. But here is the wonder: In those empty hands, in those empty hearts, the Lord Jesus gives Himself—not by works, not by our labors, not with money or price, but through free and sovereign grace. This is the precious gospel message.

What a lesson it is to come without a price, to come empty-handed. We, by ourselves, might even change the gospel into a new law if given the chance. This is because within our hearts, there always exists the notion that we must bring something, that we have to contribute something, and that we ought to render ourselves worthy of God's gifts. Our hearts are enemies of stooping and bowing down before the Lord. Yet, the Lord brings His people to that very place.

Oh, what a view, what a sight. There comes a sinner, empty-handed, and there is God's gift—the gift of God's glory—our precious Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. He draws near and becomes dear to the broken heart and the contrite spirit. Where our righteousness has been reduced to filthy rags, and where we confess that we cannot stand before the Lord, crying out, 'Oh God, be merciful unto me, a sinner,' there the Lord

leads and teaches us, showing us where the manna is to be found for hungry and famished souls. The Holy Spirit reveals in our hearts that precious Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Just as the manna was sweet—sweet as honey, as Scripture says—so is the Lord Jesus, that precious gift from the Father, exceedingly sweet to those who know are their sins and miseries. Have you ever tasted the bitterness of your sins and miseries? To such a people, the Lord Jesus Christ becomes a sweet Savior. He is altogether lovely; He is altogether sweet in His promises, in His seeking after those who are lost. He is sweet in the way He comforts the soul, providing comfort through the gospel's promises that show His righteousness in His precious blood in the sacrifice on the cross of Calvary. How sweet the Lord Jesus Christ is to the mouth of faith!

The manna was God's gift to an undeserving people, and we have also learned that the appetite determined the quantity gathered. Isn't this also true in the lives of God's people? We possess as much of Jesus as we yearn for. Thus, let there be a need—a profound yearning—for Christ. Let there be a great need, a great hunger and desire for Him. If we open our mouths, He has promised He will fill them. Often, we look within ourselves, but we should look outside of ourselves. Let there be a need for Him, a desire for more of Him, the able and willing Savior. Let there be a need for Him, that bread of life, and He fulfills desires in accordance with the measure of faith. There is always an abundance in Him, enough for both the little ones and the matured in faith."

The manna fulfilled the daily need of the Israelites. They had to venture out early in the morning, each and every day. No, we will never outgrow the act of stooping, gathering, and coming with empty hands and baskets. Moreover, what we collect today will not sustain us for tomorrow. Certainly, within the hearts of God's people, there lingers the aftertaste of the preciousness of that manna, the bread of life. Yet, we must go out again and again, day by day communing with Him who is the bread of life. This shows us that the Lord keeps His people poor and needy.

A humbling gift of God. In such a way the Lord makes us to understand what the Apostle Paul says: 'As having nothing' - nothing in myself I bring – 'yet possessing all things and relying on that gracious gift from the living God—our Lord Jesus Christ—who shows us God's glory. What a precious truth, congregation, about the glory of God in the great gift of manna in the wilderness.

It fell around the camp, around the tents of the Israelites. They didn't need to journey far to obtain the manna. Similarly, the gospel brings the manna close to us. The word is nigh unto thee. The word brings that precious Savior so near that we must warn you. We must warn you, congregation. The gospel brings the manna so nearby that you

could almost trample it underfoot with your feet of unbelief. Shouldn't we be warning one another against such a great sin?

But on the other hand, the gospel brings the gift of God—the bread of life—so close that no matter how unworthy or rebellious we are in our own eyes before the Lord, we only must bow down in our emptiness and unworthiness to receive that precious gift from God.

"Tomorrow then ye shall see the glory of the Lord." Boys and girls, you know the feeling you get when your birthday is just around the corner. It fills you with anticipation, making you eagerly await that upcoming day. At that moment, you think to yourself, 'Just one more night's sleep, and then tomorrow will be here.'

Here, the Lord spoke to the people of Israel, saying, "in the morning, tomorrow, you will see the manna, the glory of God." I believe there were boys and girls among the Israelites who had heard from their fathers and mothers, 'Tomorrow, tomorrow the Lord will show His glory.' This likely ignited a yearning in the hearts of these young boys and girls to witness the glory of the Lord.

Is it your desire as well to see God's glory? To know the Lord Jesus Christ? To receive a new heart? To receive that portion of the people of the Lord? To partake in that happiness and eternal life? If so, the Lord will encourage you to seek after the Lord. He brings His glory close; kneel down, fold your hands, open your Bible, and pray, 'Lord, show it not only to others, but Lord, show it also to me.'

'Tomorrow.' This also prompts us, people of the Lord, to contemplate the eternal tomorrow. God grants His people a foretaste of that hidden manna, preserved in heaven. Then, in that eternal tomorrow, the hidden manna will be presented to all who await Him from heaven. And there, it will hold true: glory, eternal glory, dwells in Emmanuel's land.

Amen.

Our closing Psalter is Psalter 292.