

Gratitude: Intro: Miracles: Manna; Brass Serpent, Numbers 21:4-8

The sinful nature cares nothing for the wants and desires of the individual it masters. It only wants control of the soul and, once done, accomplishes its hidden agenda of neutralizing the believer's spiritual advance.

Consequently, a believer who is under the rulership of his first husband—the sinful nature—has no gratitude towards his second Husband—Jesus Christ. This logistical supply of daily bread was a constant provision to every Jew—in fellowship or out—during the entire 40-year trek in the Jornada.

The Jews' lack of gratitude was never more obstinately stated than in Numbers 21:5 where they said, “**We loathe this miserable food.**” This “*miserable food*” was not only a divine provision of pure grace, it was also the daily cuisine of the elect angels, according to:

Psalm 78:24 - And he rained down manna upon them to eat, and gave them food from heaven.

Psalm 78:25 - Man did eat the bread of angels.

If they loathe the food miraculously provided them for their physical sustenance then they obviously have no gratitude for the God who gave it. Likewise, there can be a lack of gratitude for the true Bread of Heaven, Jesus Christ, who compared Himself with manna.

John 6:28 - The multitude said to Him, “What shall we do that we may work the works of God?”

John 6:29 - Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.”

John 6:30 - They said therefore to Him, “What then do You do for a sign that we may see and believe You? What work do You perform?”

John 6:31 - Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written [in **Exodus 16:4**], ‘He gave them bread out of heaven to eat.’”

John 6:32 - Jesus therefore said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread out of heaven, but it is My Father who gives you the true bread out of heaven.

John 6:33 - For the bread of God is that which comes down out of heaven and gives life to the world.”

John 6:34 - They said therefore to Him, “Lord, evermore give us this bread.”

John 6:35 - Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; he who comes to Me shall not hunger and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.”

Manna was celestial food miraculously supplied to teach the principle of logistical grace for the body. Jesus Christ is the “*true bread of heaven*” vicariously supplied to provide eternal life for the souls of those who believe.

Manna from heaven sustained the Jews physically in the *Jornada* of the Sinai. Manna from the Word of God sustains us spiritually in the *Jornada* of the Angelic Conflict. For both Jew and Gentile, Jesus Christ is the Manna of life. The one who believes in Him “*shall not hunger and shall never thirst.*”

3. Throughout the *Jornada* experience, the Jews continued in their negative mental attitudes towards the plan of God. This ultimately led them to the point of the sin unto death. One of the more graphic administrations of terminal discipline in the *Jornada* occurred surrounding the miracle of the brazen or brass serpent.

Numbers 21:4 - Then the Israelites set out from Mount Hor by way of the Gulf of Aqaba, to go around the land of Edom; and the people became impatient because of the journey.

Numbers 21:5 - And the people spoke against God and Moses, “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the *Jornada*? For there is no food and no water and we loath this miserable food.”

Numbers 21:6 - And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people, so that many people of Israel died.

Numbers 21:7 - So the people came to Moses and said, “We have sinned, because we have spoken against the Lord and you; intercede with the Lord that He may remove the serpents from us.” And Moses interceded for the people.

Numbers 21:8 - Then the Lord said to Moses, “Make a fiery serpent and set it on a standard; and it shall come about that everyone who is bitten, when he looks at it, he shall live.”

No matter how many demonstrations of divine power and grace provisions the Jews received, they never were able to express faith under pressure. Their habitual wheel-track was always to complain and grumble, i.e., they were constantly murmuring about something. This time they were bored because they were tired of meandering around the *Jornada* for almost 40 years. Nevertheless, they had whined one time too often. Divine discipline was now intensified to the terminal phase.

Venomous snakes were unleashed by the Lord whose poison was hemotoxic and caused a burning sensation among those bitten. This maximum goad proved to be extremely effective as many came to Moses confessing their sin of rebellion.

The solution given by the Lord to Moses was to craft a serpent from brass and lift it into the air on a standard used for military banners. This standard is referred to in the Hebrew by the word *nes* and means, “*signal pole, standard, ensign, banner, sign, guidon.*”

In Exodus 17 the Lord miraculously defeated the army of Amalek at the Battle of Rephidim. Afterward Moses set up an altar and named it *Jehovah-Nissi*: The Lord is My Banner.