

BREAD - What Is It?

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Bread is another symbol (like stones/rocks) that is used in many places and in many forms in the Bible. Of what is bread a symbol? We have raw bread, (i.e. mixed ingredients but not baked); leavened or unleavened bread; shew bread; bread used in miracles; manna; communion bread, and Jesus said that he is the bread of life and his body is bread. Is there one explanation for bread that will fit in all these circumstances?

The key is in the understanding of the shew bread: **Lev 24:5-9**: *5. And thou shalt take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes thereof: two tenth deals shall be in one cake. 6. And thou shalt set them in two rows, six on a row, upon the pure table before the Lord. 7. And thou shalt put pure frankincense upon each row, that it may be on the bread for a memorial, even an offering made by fire unto the Lord. 8. Every sabbath he shall set it in order before the Lord continually, being taken from the children of Israel by an everlasting ⁽⁵⁷⁶⁹⁾ covenant. 9. And it shall be Aaron's and his sons'; and they shall eat it in the holy place: for it is most holy unto him of the offerings of the Lord made by fire by a perpetual ⁽⁵⁷⁶⁹⁾ statute.*

Israel furnished shew bread every seventh day, but only Aaron and his sons ate the bread. Notice that 'everlasting' and 'perpetual' come from the same Hebrew word. The word literally means to 'continue forever.' It is obvious, as we look back, that the shew bread has not continued forever. So, why would God allow it to stop? Because the shew bread is to be understood as a shadow of something that would continue forever. Israel, its statutes and its economy are shadows of spiritual Israel today (Rom 2:28-29; 9:6-8).

By an Everlasting Covenant: There are three signs of the everlasting covenant: Rainbow (Gen 9:9-12) = complete understanding; circumcision = cutting sin out of the heart; the 7th day Sabbath = spiritual rest in God, or being settled into truth until you cannot be moved. The covenant of circumcision was given to Abraham (Gen 17:10-12) because he is the type of those abiding in Christ. God has promised to circumcise the heart (Col 2:11) with complete understanding to the point that all who receive it will rest in God's understanding. Israel as a nation was given the third sign of the covenant at the same time they were given the manna.

What bread did Israel furnished as a shadow? **Deut 8:3**: *And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knew not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live.* Manna is bread, but it is not the spoken word. The verse is telling us there are two things by which we live - bread and the spoken word. Manna, or bread, has to be the written word! The Bible was not only written by apostles and prophets, it was also written by kings, or scribes of kings, as historians. There are 66 books in the Bible, representative of what Israel, by divine wisdom, has given the world. Now, will the 'written word' fit the various applications of bread? Lets check a few.

Shew bread: The shew bread was 12 unleavened loaves arranged in two rows ⁽⁴⁶³⁵⁾ or piles of six each (66). The number 12 represents the whole of Israel (12 tribes) who furnished the bread as explained above. The primary meaning of (row) *ma`areketh* ⁽⁴⁶³⁵⁾ and its derivatives is to arrange or set in order. Israel furnished the bread, but Aaron and his sons 'set it in order' on the table (another symbol to be studied). A priest is a symbol of one abiding in Christ, hearing and doing His instructions. When we abide in Christ, we become priests of God (cf Ex 19:5-6; Rev 1:5-6) and the Spirit of Truth sets in order the bread, or the written word, in our understanding (enter new covenant). If not a priest, you are considered a common person or ruler, which the blood of their sacrifices did not go into the tabernacle (Lev 4:22-35), but was poured into the earth at the base of the altar of burnt offering in the court. (Cf Rev 11:1-2)

The numbers 66 have a dual meaning here. 1. Six is the number of man, and God furnished the written word by Israel. 2. These two sixes also represent a priest's understanding of the pre-incarnate and incarnate Son of God, who is called the Word (Jn 1:1), and it is the Son through which we receive understanding of the Bible (cf Rev 1:1). When we refuse to hear God's explanation, we in effect exalt our throne above His. **Isa 14:12-13:** *12. How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, who did weaken the nations! 13. For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north.* The table of shew bread was placed on the north side of the first apartment of the tabernacle (Ex 26:35). It represents God's throne. Lucifer is a parable of the king of Babylon (see verse 4), a figure of a person walking in their own light. They live in rebellion according to their own, or another man's interpretation of the writings, thereby placing self on the table (666), in type, because they are ruling their own kingdom according to their own understanding.

Manna: Ex 16:4: *Then said the Lord unto Moses, Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you; and the people shall go out and gather a certain rate ⁽¹⁶⁹⁷⁾ every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no.* Rain is doctrine/teaching, and being from heaven, it is God's teaching (Deut 32:1-2). Two weeks after God started raining manna, Israel came to Mt Sinai, where God spoke the ten words (concepts - 1697) to Israel, then wrote them on two stone tablets because Israel refused to hear the Lord (Ex 20:19). The stone tablets are symbols of the heart (cp 2 Cor 3:3)! Many other statutes were given along with the ceremonial services, all to be viewed today as allegories to help us understand the ten written in stone. In figure, God rained bread from heaven when he spoke those ten precepts, and the letter of the ten is the old covenant under which Israel lived (Deut 4:13; 5:1-22). However, the new covenant is to hear God and let Him write the deeper spiritual meaning of the ten on our hearts. Thus, all God's teachings can be summed up in these two concepts - Love God with the whole self, and love your neighbor as yourself.

The Hebrew root of the word manna (*man*, i.e. mawn) is *mah* (maw - 4100), which is an interrogative pronoun meaning, 'what, how, why, how long, etc.' So manna has been given the general meaning of 'what is it?' Those questions are the same ones asked by the disciples as they walked daily with Jesus, and the same questions we ask today as we walk with Jesus in the spirit of the mind (Eph 4:23). Manna was only given to Israel while they were in the wilderness. So this bread represents an individual's experience when the writings are read but not understood because they are not listening to the Spirit. This bread comes in darkness (Num 11:9), and is gathered off the earth (Ex 16:16). Another characteristic of the manna is that it melted when the sun waxed hot (Ex 16:21). When the fiery truth comes, it will melt away wilderness thinking (Jer 23:29). Manna was good when the people ground it and made cakes of it (Num 11:8), that is, when they walked faithfully in that understanding. The Savior is still leading us through the wilderness, and if we are faithful in the unrighteous riches, He will trust us with the true riches, which are available in the promised land.

One more lesson from the manna: The people were to daily gather it according to the amount one could eat, the average being a homer (Ex 16:16-18). If they tried save some for the next day, the manna bred worms and stank. Religious groups begin in sincerity, but eventually reach a point of trying to keep what they have and make it last until Christ comes. A worm is a symbol of the sin nature. Look at past spiritual advancements, all started by individuals, and out of these movements were formed various denominations. Once formed these churches stopped advancing in truth. The manna (doctrine) on which they based their organization has remained approximately the same, and has bred worms until it stinks. Why? Because it is no longer meat in due season. **Pr 4:18:** *...the path of the just is as the shining light, that shines more and more unto the perfect day.* The 'perfect day' is the spiritual day of which the seventh day is a symbol.

Another way of expressing this idea is that we are to gather understanding from God's word daily and trust that there will be more tomorrow, and the next day, and the next, until *we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.* (Eph 4:13). This verse is not saying 'my faith in Christ, or knowledge about the Son', but come into the Son's knowledge and faith! It is the hidden manna we need! **Rev 2:17:** *He that hath a ear, let him hear what the Spirit says unto the churches; To him that overcomes will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knows saving he that receives it.* Manna was put into a solid gold vessel and placed in the most holy of the tabernacle (Ex 16:33; Heb 9:4). It is a symbol of the hidden manna, which is Christ's understanding of the written word; the white stone is a pure concept; the new name is a new character written in your heart. No one else knows it because you received it directly from God through His son. Others will only see the outward result of the change in you.

Leavened & Unleavened bread: Ps 104:14-15: *14. He causes the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth; 15. And wine that makes glad the heart of man, and oil to make his face to shine, and bread which strengthens man's heart.* Notice that all food comes out of the earth, beginning with a seed planted, then the sun and rain cause the seed to sprout and grow. It is bread which strengthens the heart, therefore we need to ensure a correct understanding so that our hearts are strengthened in the Lord, and not the self righteousness of the flesh.

Once, when Jesus and his disciples were getting in a boat, Jesus told them to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees. They reasoned that it was because they had taken no literal bread. Here is the outcome: **Mt 16:11-12:** *11. How is it that ye do not understand that I spake it not to you concerning bread, that ye should beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees? 12. Then understood they how that he bade them not beware of the leaven of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees.* A Pharisee or Sadducee is a type of a person who exalts himself in his own understanding and attacks others who differ with themselves. They even fight among themselves. Read the whole account and parallels in Mark 8 and Luke 12, and notice how Jesus equated 'little faith' with 'lack of understanding.'

Bread and feast days: The feast days of Israel are kept spiritually. Paul understood this: **1 Cor 5:6-8:** *6. Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leavens the whole lump? 7. Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: 8. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.* Man's bread (understanding of the word) is leavened with 'malice and wickedness', but we are to be unleavened concerning the world's way of thinking, accepting Christ's bread (understanding of the word) which is leavened with sincerity and truth. Purge out the old leaven (doctrine), i.e. advance in the doctrine of Christ.

Summary: Jesus is the bread of life (Jn 6:33, 35), and we need to understand what it means to 'eat his flesh and drink his blood' (Jn 6:53) if we are to grow spiritually. All of Jesus' disciples, except the 12, left him because of this saying. The men on the road to Emmaus did not recognize Jesus until he blessed and brake the bread as a type of what he did as he walked with them. After the cross, the disciples understood what Jesus taught by what was written and what was spoken (Jn 2:22). Jesus, as the Spirit of Truth will walk with us blessing and breaking the bread of life if we are willing to apply ourselves to searching the scriptures and applying revealed truths in our lives. **1 Tim 4:6:** *If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.* **2 Jn 9:** *Whosoever transgresses, and abides not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abides in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. Amen.*