



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 every day, that I may prove them, whether they will walk in my law, or no. 5 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. 6 And Moses and Aaron said unto all the children of Israel, At even, then ye shall know that the LORD hath brought you out from the land of Egypt. (Exodus 16:4-6)

Like most very old hymns, this hymn is based squarely on the Holy Word of God. It reveals a most profound mystery in both the real, present and Hidden Manna of the Lord. Lyrics are by George Atkins in 1819, and music is *Holy Manna* by William Moore in 1825. There are two major concepts of our faith revealed herein – the spirit of worship, and the nature of God’s Word in the Holy Manna. *6 O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker. (Psalm 95:6)* In some hymnals, the hymn is titled, *Brethren, we have met to Worship*.

Holy Manna

Brethren, we have met to worship and adore the Lord our God;
Will you pray with all your power, while we try to preach the Word?
All is vain unless the Spirit of the Holy One comes down;
Brethren, pray, and holy manna will be showered all around.

Brethren, see poor sinners round you slumbering on the brink of woe;
Death is coming, hell is moving, can you bear to let them go?
See our fathers and our mothers, and our children sinking down;
Brethren, pray and holy manna will be showered all around.

Sisters, will you join and help us? Moses’ sister aided him;
Will you help the trembling mourners who are struggling hard with sin?
Tell them all about the Savior, tell them that He will be found;
Sisters, pray, and holy manna will be showered all around.

Is there here a trembling jailer, seeking grace, and filled with tears?
Is there here a weeping Mary, pouring forth a flood of tears?
Brethren, join your cries to help them; sisters, let your prayers abound;
Pray, Oh pray that holy manna may be scattered all around.

Let us love our God supremely, let us love each other, too;
Let us love and pray for sinners, till our God makes all things new.
Then He'll call us home to Heaven, at His table we'll sit down;
Christ will gird Himself and serve us with sweet manna all around.

Brethren, we have met to worship and adore the Lord our God; Will you pray with all your power, while we try to preach the Word? All is vain unless the Spirit of the Holy One comes down; Brethren, pray, and holy manna will be showered all around. What is the purpose of worship? Is it to entertain through the media of modern and sensuous music? Is it to portray the charisma of men and women? Is it to demonstrate and boast of some contrived gift of the Holy Ghost of which Heaven is not the author? Or is worship intended to praise the Lord our God – to lift up His Word and His glory to the exclusion of any such glory to man? Preaching, too, is not tales of the last football game, or some event on the local golf course. It is not telling the latest jokes. It must be centered on the Word of God for any other word preached belongs to man. The efficacious preaching of God's Word has forever been to allow His Word to be the outline and substance (expositional preaching) of any sermon. Any preaching that is not under the power of the Holy Ghost is vain. If we pray aright, and the preaching is true and pure, Holy Manna will descend from Heaven. Anything that comes down from God is Holy! The true Manna of the Christian is Jesus Christ.

Brethren, see poor sinners round you slumbering on the brink of woe; Death is coming, hell is moving, can you bear to let them go? See our fathers and our mothers, and our children sinking down; Brethren, pray and holy manna will be showered all around. Observing a burning house filled with trapped souls would move most of us to take action to save them; yet a much more intense danger awaits those who are not aware of their sinful state and the means of grace made available to them in Christ. When I was young, my mother asked me if I sometimes hated someone. Why, yes, I did hate certain bad fellows at school, I responded. She told me to imagine those people helpless and dying a tortuous death. Would I then feel hate toward them? No, the hate vanishes when the enormity of the destiny that awaits such unrepentant people is realized. Even on the cross, our Lord pled with the Father, *Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.* Do you ever wonder why our Lord did not forgive them outright Himself? I believe it was because of the offense, not to Himself, but to the Father in the wanton murder of His only Begotten Son. It would be the Father's role to forgive such brutal sin. Have you ever prayed for the man in the pulpit during his sermon? I hope so for it calls down the artillery from Heaven by doing so. Why do we stand idly by while scores and millions are standing with one foot in the world and the other in Hell?

Sisters, will you join and help us? Moses' sister aided him; Will you help the trembling mourners who are struggling hard with sin? Tell them all about the Savior, tell them that He will be found; Sisters, pray, and holy manna will be showered all around. The responsibility to witness to the world is not divided by gender. Deborah, a prophet and judge in Israel, led the Armies of Israel, along with Barak, to defeat the Canaanites. She was mightily used of the Lord. Deborah, in Hebrew by the way, means BEE. The woman of God is as busy as a BEE and like Deborah. The prayers of a faithful and aged old man, and of a tiny little girl, are likewise heard in the corridors of Heaven. It is faith that sustains the prayer without distinction of persons.

Is there here a trembling jailer, seeking grace, and filled with tears? Is there here a weeping Mary, pouring forth a flood of tears? Brethren, join your cries to help them; sisters, let your prayers abound; Pray, Oh pray that holy manna may be scattered all around. The lost sinner does not know how to gather Holy Manna. He must be taught from the elementary Word to the fulness of it. The jailer may become his own prisoner without the interceding Grace of God. He needs to know. The Word itself is Christ. He is our Bread of Life that came down from Heaven. He is our Emmanuel. Even good Christian people may be mourning over losses that are phantoms of the imagination and not real. If Mary Magdalene knew that the Gardener was Christ, she would never have wept tears of mourning. She needed to be told! We not only pray for the lost in this world, but also for those of faith.

Our prayers establish the environment of action which God is pleased to look upon. The Manna descends, and we are blessed in ways we may not even have imagined. The Manna that is Hidden is the sweetest because that is the Manna of Faith. *He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh 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 knoweth saving he that receiveth it.* (Rev 2:17) Why a NEW NAME that nobody knows but the receiver? Because it will be untarnished and no bad report or sinful reputation can be accounted it. No one will be able to point to you with that name and say, Remember that terrible sin that old John Doe did when a young man? That old name is gone and replaced by a pure name. The white stone represented a verdict of innocent. Not truly innocent, but justified by the blood of Christ. The close and personal fellowship a Christian has with the Lord and His Word is the Hidden Manna.

Let us love our God supremely, let us love each other, too; Let us love and pray for sinners, till our God makes all things new. Then He'll call us home to Heaven, at His table we'll sit down; Christ will gird Himself and serve us with sweet manna all around. There is no other way to love the Lord except 'supremely.' If our all is not centered on Him, nothing else matters for all things come of Him. Christ gave us a new commandment. If we keep it, we will be true Christians: ³⁴ *A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.* ³⁵ *By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.* (John 13:34-35) Not a silly love, but a sacrificial love. If we say we love God and hate a brother or sister, we are lying. The urge that motivates us to go on foreign soil to witness of Christ is that we already love those who may be called but do not know of it yet. God will, indeed, make all things new, and we shall sit in the Banqueting House of our Lord with more Manna than the Universe can comprehend.

Pass the Manna, please!