

Numbers 11:9

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And when the dew fell upon the camp in the night, the manna fell upon it.

Analysis

This verse describes the miraculous nightly provision of manna as dew descended. The Hebrew phrase 'when the dew fell' (Hebrew *bered hatal*, בִּרְדַּת הַטָּל) indicates that manna accompanied the dew—arriving with it, perhaps suspended in it. This nightly provision emphasized God's faithfulness: every morning brought fresh evidence of divine care. The regularity of this miracle (occurring six nights weekly for forty years) demonstrates God's covenant commitment.

The association with dew connects manna to natural processes (dew being a regular meteorological phenomenon) while maintaining its supernatural character (dew doesn't normally deposit bread-like substance). This pattern—God working through natural means for supernatural ends—appears throughout Scripture and anticipates the incarnation, where divinity took on genuine humanity. The nightly timing ensured that each day began with fresh provision, preventing hoarding (except the pre-Sabbath double portion) and requiring daily dependence.

The manna's predictable arrival with dew each morning parallels the Christian's need for daily communion with Christ. Just as manna couldn't be stored (except for the Sabbath), yesterday's spiritual experience cannot sustain today's needs. Believers must daily seek fresh encounter with God through Scripture and prayer. The Father's provision of manna in the wilderness anticipates His provision of the Son as the bread of life (John 6:32-33).

Historical Context

The nightly provision of manna continued for forty years until Israel entered Canaan and ate the land's produce (Joshua 5:12). This represents approximately 14,600 nights of miraculous provision (accounting for no manna on Sabbaths). Jewish calculations estimated that if each person gathered an omer (about 2 liters) daily, God provided thousands of tons of food weekly for the entire congregation. The comparison to dew was apt—dew in desert regions provides crucial moisture, and Sinai's temperature fluctuations produce significant dew. Yet natural dew alone could never produce the quantity of manna needed.

Related Passages

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Study Questions

1. How does the daily provision of manna challenge modern assumptions about self-sufficiency and long-term security?
2. What does the nightly renewal of manna teach about God's faithfulness and the importance of daily spiritual disciplines?

Interlinear Text

יָרַד	הֵטַל	עַל	הַמִּחֲנֶה	לַיְלָה	יָרַד	הַמָּן
fell	And when the dew	H5921	upon the camp	in the night	fell	the manna
H3381	H2919		H4264	H3915	H3381	H4478

עָלִיוֹ:

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