

Cloud that provided shade for all of them during the heat of each day, and light at night. They ALL witnessed the Glory of God visible in the Cloud. . . . And that evening they all saw the quail that flew in and covered the ground of their entire campsite. And everyone had quail meat to eat that night. . . . The following morning everyone collected this frost-like white stuff from the ground that looked like coriander seed and tasted like a honey enriched cracker. No matter how much (or how little) of this stuff they collected, each and every one of them had enough to eat for that day. And those who tried to hold back, or hoard, some of it for the next day (clearly not fully trusting or believing that God would again provide enough for them tomorrow), learned that it was a mistake to try to store manna. The only exception being on the sixth day when everyone collected enough for two days so they would have enough to eat when they rested on the Sabbath. And if anyone thought they could gain an advantage by going out to look for more manna to gather up on the Sabbath – they wouldn't find any on what was to be their day of rest. There was no point to looking for 'more' when they already had 'enough.' When God had already provided 'enough' to everyone. And week after week, no matter how much or how little any individual person or household had gathered on the sixth day – they found they still had enough to eat on the seventh day of Sabbath. God had generously provided enough for each and every one of them.

But we can imagine how irritating that might have been for people who were very diligent about gathering manna. No matter how long and hard they worked at gathering manna they still ended up with no more manna than someone who barely put in any time or effort to gather it! Now does that seem fair to you?! . . . To which God could reply, "How is that unfair? Didn't I say I would provide enough for each person? Can't I do with my manna what I want to do with it? Take what you have been given and eat it."

God is going to care about, and care for, ALL of God's people as God sees fit. God will be generous. And God will be just. We may not fully realize what a blessing that is until we see ourselves as the workers who couldn't find any work all day and have begun to wonder if we would survive another day. And then in the midst of our desperation, at the very end of the day, we given work AND a full day's wage. . . . Or maybe we won't appreciate God's generosity and God's justice until we know what it is like to be in pain each time we bend over to gather the manna that is right there on the ground – if only we could reach it. Perhaps someone will be kind enough to help us. Or perhaps we will miraculously find that what we could gather is enough for today. . . . But we really don't like to see ourselves as being among those who are 'in need' of God's generosity, do we? We'd rather see ourselves as those who can get up and get to work at dawn's early light, or who can manage just fine with gathering plenty of manna each day. And yet, how will we receive God's good and generous gifts if we can't see ourselves as being in need of them? Hmmm. We might need to think on that. Amen.