

MANNA

Written by Ted Swartz

Characters: Aaron, Moses, Cal (he's hard of hearing) & Marge

Scripture text: Exodus 16

Props: clipboard for Moses

Length: 6.5 minutes

Setting: outdoors

AARON: Moses, I've called the people, the hungry people. They'll be here soon...

MOSES: Fine.

AARON: Are you sure you heard him right?

MOSES: Yes, I'm sure ... pretty sure.

AARON: Pretty sure?

MOSES: I wrote it down—he spoke and I wrote it down.

AARON: So we get up in the morning and it's there?

MOSES: I suppose...

AARON: It's like frost—just lying there?

MOSES: Right.

AARON: And this is our plan?

MOSES: Yes.

AARON: And you're sticking to it?

MOSES: Sticking to it.

AARON: What will we call it?

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MOSES: Call what?

AARON: The food. The stuff we find just lying on the ground when we get up.

MOSES: (*Naming it, checking notes.*) What is it?

AARON: Right.

MOSES: You got it.

AARON: Got what?

MOSES: The food.

AARON: We call it what?

MOSES: More or less.

AARON: More or less what?

MOSES: Correct.

AARON: Moses, what is it we call it?

MOSES: We call it what.

AARON: That's what I'm asking you.

MOSES: What is it.

AARON: That's the question!

MOSES: Aaron, the food, we call it "what is it."

AARON: What is it?!

MOSES: Yes.

AARON: Moses!!

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MOSES: Aaron.

AARON: When we get up, in the morning ... there will be food lying there?

MOSES: Yes.

AARON: The name of the food is "What is it?"

MOSES: Yes.

AARON: Is he making this up as he goes along? Is he messin' with us?

MOSES: I just wrote it down—he spoke, and I wrote it down.

AARON: Do we have another name for it?!

MOSES: Name for what?

AARON: Yes.

MOSES: Yes, what?

AARON: The food! Do we have another name for the food?!

MOSES: (*Checks notes.*) Manna.

AARON: Manna.

MOSES: Right.

AARON: You're killing me, Moses.

MOSES: Just writin' it down.

AARON: OK, here come the chosen people.

MOSES: You tell 'em.

AARON: Not a chance.

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(MOSES along with AARON is now before the people who have entered while discussion between MOSES and AARON is happening. They are hungry, tired, in crisis.)

MOSES: Listen up, people, we have information about the food situation.

CAL: What did he say?

MARGE: He has information ... about the food.

CAL: What food?

MARGE: Exactly.

CAL: What?

MARGE: Shhh.

MOSES: When you get up, in the morning, there will be dew.

CAL: What did he say?

MARGE: Dew, there will be dew.

CAL: Will do what?

MARGE: No, there will be dew—in the morning.

CAL: There's always dew in the morning.

MARGE: That's as far as we've gotten.

CAL: Well, this is going nowhere fast.

MARGE: Shhh.

MOSES: This dew...

CAL: What?

MARGE: Still the dew.

CAL: Thought this meeting was about food.

(MOSES has noticed the conversation; pauses.)

MARGE: It is.

CAL: We're eating dew?

MARGE: Of course not.

MOSES: You are to gather this dew.

MARGE: *(To CAL.)* We gather the dew.

CAL: How do you gather dew?

MARGE: Not a clue.

CAL: What happened to the food?

MARGE: Still waiting.

MOSES: Is there a problem?

MARGE: No, Moses. No problem. We're with you. Dew ... right. And grateful.
Thank you.

MOSES: This is our food.

CAL: What did he say?

MARGE: He said we're eating dew.

CAL: Great.

MOSES: Aaron, you want to take this?

AARON: It's your gig, Moses.

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MOSES: There will be dew. When it dries, what is left you will gather to eat, only as much as you need. You will gather an omer...

MARGE: Omer?

MOSES: ...each according to the number in your tent.

MARGE: Omer?

CAL: Tenth of an ephah.

MARGE: Ah. So an omer.

MOSES: Once again, is there a problem?

MARGE: Nope, got it. Omers, ephahs and dew.

CAL: I'm hungry.

MARGE: Shhh.

MOSES: Just so you know, when I last spoke to the Lord he mentioned very specifically ... grumbling.

MARGE: *(To CAL.)* Grumbling...

MOSES: ...Yes, grumbling, and quite honestly he's not very happy about it. Now, it is important you gather...

MARGE: Question!

MOSES: Yes?

MARGE: It's Moses, right?

MOSES: *(With a sigh.)* Yes.

MARGE: Hey, Moses.

MOSES: Hey—you have a question?

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MARGE: Moses ... this dew ... by the way, what will we call it?

(MOSES looks back at AARON—who shakes his head.)

MOSES: Manna.

MARGE: Manna. So, we're gathering the manna, having it just outside the tent would be nice. I assume we'll still be on the move.

MOSES: Yes. Still be on the move.

MARGE: Wandering...

MOSES: You had a question!

MARGE: If we had an unseen development—we oversleep, it's raining. Can the hubby just go ahead and get a couple days' worth?

MOSES: No. Just follow the rules. You can only gather as much as you need that day.

MARGE: Why can't we get a big load all at once, so we won't risk running out of food again?

MOSES: Aaron?

AARON: You just can't.

MOSES: You just can't.

MARGE: Do we have a reason?

MOSES: Look, do you want to starve?

MARGE: No, no, no starving. Been there, hated it. Just wondering.

AARON: It'll rot.

MOSES: It'll rot.

CAL: What?

MARGE: It'll rot.

CAL: What will?

MARGE: Exactly.

MOSES: *(Under his breath.)* These are the chosen people. *(Back to the group.)*
You realize, you are not complaining to me really—you are complaining to God.

CAL: What did he say?

MARGE: He said God's tired of your complaining.

CAL: What complaining?

MARGE: Exactly.

MOSES: All right, people. That's it.

(AARON and MOSES move off.)

MARGE: Exactly what are his qualifications for leadership?

CAL: A burning bush.

MARGE: A burning bu ... what?

CAL: A bush ... a burning bush. God spoke to him in a burning bush.

MARGE: You're kidding.

CAL: Nope.

MARGE: Since when is flaming shrubbery a basis for choosing leadership?

CAL: You would prefer being a slave?

MARGE: Least we weren't starving.

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CAL: We won't be.

MARGE: Oh that's right, the dew. Dew we eat ... *(As they move off.)* That's not gonna get old in a couple of months...

THE END

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