

About the Readings on August 4, 2024

***[Click on the links for the Bible Verse\(s\)](#)

Sunday, July 31–August 6 Lectionary 18

In this second of the Sundays during which we hear John 6, the focus can be on the metaphor of manna. “What is it?”—life from God.



[Exodus 16:2-4](#) [9-15](#)

Before the several tribes colonized Canaan and became united as Israelites, the ancestors of the Jews were nomads, living what might have been a hand-to-mouth existence in the wilderness. Things of nature—the cloud, the manna, the quails—are seen as gifts from God. Christians have continued to see all our food as a gift from God.

[The Psalm for the Day](#)

Having heard the story of the manna, we respond by singing [Psalm 78:23-29](#). This long historical psalm includes a section retelling the manna story, calling the miraculous food the bread of angels. Later in the service, we will be fed with the bread of angels.

[Ephesians 4:1-16](#)

This reading, like others from Ephesians, is laden with phrases important for Christian catechesis. The author writes of Christ descending, an apt metaphor on the day we think of manna. Eating sustains the body, and our eating of regular food and “the bread of angels” nourishes the body of Christ.

[John 6:24-35](#)

John’s discourse does not suggest that the historicity of the manna story is the main point. Rather, it is Christ we are believing in, in whom we place our life’s trust. Both the manna and the barley bread of the feeding story become metaphors for Christ and the life he gives.