

means of supply in the desert round them, the bitterest murmurs broke forth against Moses and Aaron. Is it not sad to read of such iniquitous and rebellious words as these. It was not against their leaders only they rebelled, but against God. After all their experience of God's goodness, and power, and wisdom, it seems wonderful that they should have dared to utter the language of men? But let us who remember the condition of these people as slaves in Egypt.

It would perhaps not be hard to find still in this earthly wilderness, though we enjoy the light of a clearer revelation, and the leadership of a greater than Moses, many who murmur and rebel against God's dealing. We say this with no desire to excuse this sin, this murmuring against God, but to remind ourselves of our greater guilt, in provoking the same merciful and loving God by rebelling against his precepts and commandments so plainly made known for our guidance. But note God's great patience with his people, and how graciously he promises to redress their grievance. (verse 4.) Thus said the Lord: "I will rain bread from Heaven," &c., "that I may prove them," this then is the object of their being led into the wilderness, just that they might be taught constant dependence on God for daily bread. (Verse 31.) "And the house of Israel called the name thereof 'Manna.'" Here as elsewhere, the enemies of truth have been at work, and those who seek to set aside all miraculous interpositions of God's hand, endeavour to show that there is still to be found in the desert a gum of the same name which is much prized by the natives. It is collected early in the morning, melts under the heat of the sun, and is congealed by the cold of night. Its taste is sweet as honey, and by its whitish colour, many travellers have it to be the Manna of Scriptures supplied to the Israelites. Some admit that there was a miracle, but it only extended as far as giving a supply of this desert Manna for the people's wants. But a careful examination of this gum proves clearly that it is wanting in all the essential characteristics of the Scripture Manna. It does not exude every year, it cannot be baked or boiled. It is not a food, but a medicine. Then we must remember other things such as the falling of double quantities on Friday, none on Sabbath and in not breeding worms. In all this and other respects it is entirely different from that which we believe God miraculously supplied from Heaven for the wants of his people Israel.

How wonderfully is set before us God's goodness to his people in His feeding them in a wilderness for 40 years. As if to

testify to coming ages and generations the miraculous supply of food, Aaron was commanded to fill a pot of it as a sample. (Heb. ix. 4.) to be laid before the testimony, that future ages might see the food on which the Lord had fed their fathers.

But let both teachers and taught carefully observe, that we who are Christians have the true bread of which that was merely typical. How beautifully the Apostles refer to this in addressing their Converts. Paul in writing to the Corinthians says (1 Cor. x. 3.) "and they did all eat of the same spiritual meat," and our blessed Lord point to Himself on the Manna when he says: "Moses gave you not that bread from Heaven; but my Father gave you the true bread from Heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from Heaven and giveth life unto the world." "I am (says Jesus) the bread of life," &c.

FOURTH SABBATH.

SUBJECT:—*Defeat of Amalek.*—Exodus xvii. 8-16.

There can be no doubt that a considerable time elapsed between the events of last lesson and the events we are now to consider. The two great miracles by which bread from Heaven been supplied to appease their hunger, and water from the Rock had flowed to quench their thirst, had produced a deep and lasting impression on the minds of the Israelites, and had at length convinced them that God was indeed among them. Under the inspiration of this impression they marched confidently against their unexpected enemies in Rephidim.

The Amalekites were descendants of Esau, and entertained a deep seated grudge against the Israelites, and especially as they saw the blessing contained in the Birthright had not been forgotten, as was manifest from the great multitude of the Israelites before them. Joshua now comes upon the scene, for the first time, and at the command of Moses clothes and organizes a body of men for the battle against Amalek. While the battle is being fought, Moses, Aaron and Hur are upon the Mount. Moses has in his hand the rod of God, which, on the memorable occasions had done good service such as at the Red Sea and the Rock in Horeb.

The old standard-bearer of Israel is now feeble with years and toil; yet his voice can still plead for his people and implore the God of battles to give the victory to them. The answer came: The victory is complete, Amalek is routed, and long and loud are the songs of triumph.

14. Write this for a memorial?" We