VOL. 07 NO. 2,
FEBRUARY, 2025
E-ISSN 3027-1533
P-ISSN 3026-8648

African Scholar Publications & Research International
www.africanscholarpub.com

Journal of African Innovation & Advanced Studies (JAIAS)

Ethical Implications of the Manna Narratives in Exodus 16: Implications for Socio-Economic Development in Contemporary African Society

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.70382/ajaias.v7i2.024

Abstract

This article focuses on the ethical implications of the Manna Narratives in Exodus 16 and the relevance of these principles for the Socio- economic development in contemporary African society besieged with hunger, starvation, economic crunch and political instability. Some of the principles that can be derived from this narrative are the principle of labour, rest, of sharing, of responsible utilization, contentment and of consciousness of God's concern for humankind and creation. Modern African leadership and followership with their underlying economic and political philosophy of winner takes all appears to violate these principles and by so doing plunged the society into a bizarre world of hunger, starvation, scarcity, economic crunch and political instability. The socio-economic implication of the Manna Narratives is thus highly relevant as a panacea in all genuine discussions and actions towards proper economic planning, management of abundant natural resources and other efforts towards alleviating the sufferings of the people and ensuring peaceful and stable society.

Keywords: Manna Narratives, Exodus 16, Socio-Economic Development, Contemporary African Society, Ethical Implications.

Introduction

The narrative of Exodus 16 has been examined from various points of departure. Scholars in literary criticism, revelation history and textual critique raised many questions and engaged in interesting debates about the editorial techniques, historical context and theological relevance of this narrative (cf. Johnston, 1996:253). Vervenne (1996:21) indicates in a thorough and comprehensive way how the book of Exodus interested many scholars from different fields and led to thought-provoking and useful results that can be of assistance in an understanding of this narrative.

This article focuses on the socio-economic implications of the gathering of the manna (Exod. 16) for African society characterized by greed, self centeredness and the quest for luxury as a result of economic crunch, political instability and religious extremism.

The research question can thus be formulated as follows: Are there any socio-economic implication in the instructions of Exodus 16 and if so, what is the relevance of these for a modern African society especially in Nigeria. The aim of the article is to deal with the historical survey of Exodus 16 from a reformed perspective which entails that a revelation-historical hermeneutical approach will be used. The focus on Christian ethical research and the assumption of a Christian point of view entails the following hermeneutical line of reasoning:

- The recognition of the divine inspiration of Scripture and its authority for Christian faith and life.
- The unity of the biblical message and the presence of continuous theological themes such as the covenant, kingdom of God, people of God, redemption and sanctification.
- The unfolding consistent revelation in the various genres of the biblical material against the background of the historical and cultural context of this material.
- The reading and understanding of a passage in Scripture within the framework of the whole revelation.
- The distinction between descriptive parts, which narrate a certain historical happening or custom, and the prescriptive parts, which establish ethical principles and norms for modern-day conduct.
- The possibility to formulate clear principles from the prescriptive parts, but also to derive ethical principles from the underlying theological themes in the unfolding revelation (cf. Kaiser & Da Silva, 1994:193).

The central theoretical argument of this article is that the narrative of Exodus 16 provides ethical motifs that can be transposed into modern-day ethical principles and norms in the field of

labour, consumption, sharing and environment. These principles are especially relevant in an age of growing self-centeredness, laziness and the quest for a luxurious lifestyle. The relevance becomes evident when this passage is interpreted in the light of a grammatical-historical and biblical theological hermeneutics as it is outlined in the above-mentioned statements (cf. Mills, 2001:4). Firstly, the historical context of Exodus will be explained. Secondly, socio-economic implications of Exodus 16 will be addressed, and thirdly the ethical relevance of Exodus 16 for modern-day African

The Historical Context of Exodus 16

Exodus tells the history of God's act of liberation of the people of the covenant from the bondage in Egypt and movement of the people to the promised land. This action of God is an action of redemption, which is the primary source of the gratitude of God's people. God acts first and then calls people to respond (Wright, 2004:25). God's actions are the foundations of human actions. In this history many important theological topics are revealed and thus also the ethical demands implicit in them. Among other topics one can refer to the people's liberation itself, which denotes the continual deliverance of the people of God from the bondage of slavery and oppression. The institution of the Passover and the way this feast has been treated in *"Go out and gather each day …": implications of the ethics of Exodus 16 …* the later history of God's people is proof of this fact. Furthermore, this narratives reveals the way in which God restored his covenant with the people irrespective of their own unbelief, lack of trust and disobedience. He establishes a new relation that entails the promise of his guidance and caring and the command to have faith and be obedient. Of utmost importance in Exodus is the revelation of God's law in the Ten Commandments. These commandments should be kept by the people of the covenant as a sign of the fact that they are God's people. Exodus is indeed an important source of ethical norms in Christian ethics (Mills, 2001:2).

The covenantal relationship between God and his people was constantly under pressure due to the people's disobedience and their unwillingness to take God on his word and to live according to his commandments. The covenantal relation was a troublesome relationship and sometimes endured the anger of God and his punishment (Vriezen, 1966:215). That was the reason for the wandering in the desert. The wandering in the desert was a direct result of the people's disobedience. It had specific significance. The people lived under the judgement of God because of their distrust of his liberating action and their disobedience. God's provision and the people's dissatisfaction with God, set the backdrop for the whole history of Exodus. According to Durham (1987:228) Exodus is a history of a theological relationship written with an incredible tension hovering, the tension of a loving provident God, giving Himself

to his chosen people whose ways reject Him. The manna history must be understood within this broader context. The event is part of one of these troublesome periods where the people had been disciplined by God because of their lack of faith on the road to the promised land (Motyer, 2005:178).

The Israelites longed for the "fleshpots of Egypt" (Exod. 16:1-3) and complained about their harsh conditions. With this attitude they repudiated their covenantal relationship with God (Ryken, 2005:425). God listened to their complaints and promised to provide food. They had to learn to put their trust in the providence of God (Olson, 2004:320). However, in spite of his punishment God still took care of his people. The history of God's provision is part of a larger "manna tradition" (Malina, 1968:1). Various other parts of the Old Testament apparently shed light on this tradition, such as Numbers 11:6-9; 21:5, Deuteronomy 8:3-16, Joshua 5:12, Psalm 78:23-25; 105:40 and Nehemiah 9:15-20. The main theme in these passages is the fact that God punishes his people for their disobedience, but also exhibits his faithfulness in the way that He nourishes and cares for them. He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither of you nor your fathers had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord. (Deut. 8:3.) He called them to faith and the expectation of the promised land. Eventually the manna stopped and *"*they ate this food from the land; there was no longer any manna for the Israelites, but that year they ate the produce of Canaan" (Jos. 5:12). Eventually the psalmist praised God, because "He brought his people out like a flock; he led them like sheep through the desert." (Ps. 78:52.) His deeds were remembered throughout their history. "Because of your great compassion you did not abandon them in the desert … You did not withhold your manna from their mouths, and you gave them water for their thirst." (Neh. 9:19 & 20.)

Durham (1987:227) contends that Yahweh's provision for his people can be seen as the ... obvious point of the compilation of Exodus 16; and the emphasis of that point overrides considerations of logical and chronological sequence in the introductory and time-setting prologue of vv 1-12 and the narrative development of these themes in vv 13-36.

Furthermore, he indicates that the redactors have gone to great lengths to stress the comprehensive nature of God's provision. The instructions in these chapters should be seen within this context.

During the period of the Israelite's wandering in the desert and the rebellion against Him, He remained faithful to his covenant and provided for his people. This provision forms the basis of his instructions that should guide and control their life of gratitude. Scholars in the evangelical tradition, such as Ryken (2005:431), tend to interpret Exodus 16 in the light of the New Testament, especially through the lenticels of John

6:22-40. He provides a good example of this interpretation when he compares the spiritual journey of Christians with the wandering of Israel in the desert and explains that as the Jews fed on the manna and the quails, the believers should feed on Jesus as the bread of life. He says: There are many ways to feed upon Jesus. We feed upon him as we study God's Word, which is all about our salvation in him. We feed upon Jesus as we have fellowship with him in prayer. And we feed upon him in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper – not physically but spiritually. The physical bread is a spiritual sign of the eternal life that Jesus gives to all who trust in him. (Ryken, 2005:431.)

However, such an exemplarist treatment of the historical event of the feeding with quails and manna does not do justice to the original message of Exodus 16 and the relevance of Old Testament ethical principles for a modern environment (Mills, 2001:6). Old Testament ethical principles and norms first need to be understood from within their socio-historical context and from that point of departure be moulded into a useful ethical tool in view of the history of revelation.

Wright (2004:17) reminds us that scholars of Old Testament ethics should try to put themselves in Israel's position and try to understand how Israel perceived and experienced their relationship with God and how that experience affected their ethical ideals and practical living as a community. Although Ryken's attempt to give the Old Testament narrative a New Testament taste, his evangelical approach actually neglects the ethical relevance of Exodus 16 for the New Testament church and modern society. Even though the ethical norms given in the Old Testament are also dealt with in the New Testament ethics, these norms are not of lesser importance for a modern environment (Vriezen, 1966:127). Therefore, Exodus 16 should be discussed within the historical context of Israel's wandering in the desert. The ethical principles and norms derived from such a discussion can be transposed into norms for a modern-day African society.

The Ethical Principles of Exodus 16

The Commands

Several commands can be identified in this passage and every command reveals an ethical principle that should guide Israel's life of gratitude. In this respect the following references, quoted from the New International Version (NIV) are important.

- Verse 4: "Thee Lord said to Moses, 'I will rain down bread from the heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and *gather enough for that day*. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions."
- Verse 16: "Each one is to gather *as much as he needs*. Take an omer for each person you have in your tent ...". Verse 18: "Each one gathered as much as he needed …".

- Verse 5: “On the sixth day they are to prepare what they bring in, and that is to be twice as much as they gathered on the other days.” Verse 22: “On the sixth day, they gathered twice as much – two omers for each person …”. Verse 30: “So the people *rested on the seventh day …*”.
- Verse 32: “Take an omer of manna and *keep it for the generations to come*, so they can see the bread I gave you to eat in the desert when I brought you out of Egypt …”. Many Old-Testament scholars concur that a rich corpus of ethical principles and norms can be derived from this passage when it is investigated within the historical context as described above (Malina, 1968; Motyer 2005; Geller, 2005; Fonrobert, 2004; Olson, 2004). What will be discussed here are the ethical principles regarding labour and rest, sharing, contentment and remembrance.

Labour and Rest

God commanded the people to go out and gather. They had to work for their food and this labour had to be done every day from dawn to dusk. On the Sabbath, however, they should not gather any food.

The narrative described in Exodus 16 is the first indication of the biblical revelation of the Sabbath. However, to understand God’s command in this passage, it must be read in the light of the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20. In his literary-theological study of the Sabbath in Exodus 16, Geller (2005:5) contends that this passage reveals two main biblical traditions, covenantal and priestly.

He indicates that the Sabbath means, among others, to “stop”. This “stopping” reflects God’s act of creation when He stopped working and commanded the day of rest.

The form of the Ten Commandments in Exodus 20 openly states that the Sabbath is a memorial, a sign of creation, in which human rest imitates, or recapitulates, the divine rest after the acts of creation. (Geller, 2005:15.)

The command to *šābat* is thus the command to rest from the daily labour – in this instance the gathering of food (Houtman, 1996:319; Olson, 2004:324). The people were instructed to remain where they were and they were not even permitted to go out. The Sabbath should be spent at home (Fonrobert, 2004:48). Other connotations can also be attached to the Sabbath. Later in the history of Israel, the people worshipped the Lord on this day and that was the tradition found by Jesus in the synagogues (Luke 4:16; Acts 13:14-41).

In the New Testament there is no indication that the Sabbath was explicitly maintained in the New-Testament church (Douma, 1996:11). However, the principle of one day rest was continued. During the reign of Emperor Constantine, Sunday was proclaimed as a day of rest in AD 321. In the reformed tradition the keeping of the day of rest has

moral and ceremonial significance. The ceremonial meaning refers to a day of worship while the moral implication refers to rest in the physical sense (Douma, 1996:111).
The moral principle that can be derived from observing the Sabbath in Exodus 16, is that labourers must have the opportunity to rest from the daily labour. Labour and rest are the two sides of the coin of work ethics. Without rest labour becomes an idol. In a culture of consumerism, with its high emphasis on productivity at all cost and on a climate of ultimate performance, this principle of regular rest is of the utmost importance (cf. Vorster, 2007:95). The day of rest also introduces a sabbath economics. Sabbath economics requires faith: a firm confidence that the world will continue to operate benevolently for a day without human labour, that God is willing and able to provide enough for the good life.

Sharing

Apparently the reason why the Israelites had sufficient resources was because they all shared what they had (Ryken, 2005:432). Paul sheds light on this passage in 2 Corinthians 8:13-15. He indicates that as during the wandering in the desert, the church of God should share in order to promote equality and to alleviate poverty and hunger. The people who gathered much, shared the surplus with the people who gathered little. The principle of sharing is deeply embedded in the covenant. With his covenant God established a caring community where the affluent cared for the poor. They had to establish a sense of community and communion. This principle was repeated over and over in the Old Testament laws regarding the interpersonal relations in this covenantal society. In the New Testament dispensation Paul transposed this principle to the church of the New Testament. (Acts 2) Just as the people of the Old Testament, the church should become a caring community and God's agent against poverty and social distress (Ridderbos, 1971:349).
The community character of God's people is stressed in the commands of Exodus 16. They live in community with God, but this reality means that they have to live in communion as a loving and caring community amidst the social problems of their environment. The communion is not only spiritual and liturgical or cultic, but realistic and concrete. God's gifts must be shared and in this way they worship the Lord of the covenant. The command corresponds with many other instructions in the Old Testament regarding the treatment of orphans, widows, slaves, aliens and even the enemy (Vriezen, 1966:453). Besides the ethical principle of labour and rest, the principle of sharing God's gifts in a concrete and suitable way can thus be derived from this passage.

Contentment

The people in the desert were called upon to gather enough for one day, and on the sixth day, for two days. Thanks to the Lord, every member of the community will have

enough to eat. There will be no one needy in the wilderness, or having too much, which may lead to disruption of the well-being of the community. As provider, Yahweh gives rules for a harmonious society (Houtman, 1996:318). Houtman's note sheds light on two important assumptions. Firstly, the people in the desert can gather enough for their daily needs. They could share, but were not allowed to consume more than they needed. Every day the people had to gather and eat whatever they have gathered. Important economic insights can be drawn from the manna history. Manna always miraculously provided just enough for the people's needs. They could gather what they needed and not what they could. A limit was set for consumption. They should not become the victims of intemperance or overindulgence and there was no room for hedonism. The people should know what they need and the gifts of God should not be wasted. Secondly, the gathering and the provision should serve the communion of the people of God.

They should not fall back in the social divisions of poor and rich, employer and employee or slave and free. Everyone had enough and there was no need for envy or a spirit of competition. The principle taught in this instruction was that of moderation in the consumption of the food as well as the obligation to always be prepared to share the gifts of God (Houtman, 1996:318).

Remembrance and Gratitude

Some manna should be kept in a jar and placed before the Lord. Later this jar was kept in the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle with the ark. The instruction that the people should keep one omer of manna for the generations to come, has a religious character (Fensham, 1970:99). The people should remember that they were kept alive and guided by the Lord. "God's intent was for the manna to be visible (not just the jar but the manna inside it) regularly as an encouragement to faith in God's continual provision for his People." (Stuart, 2006:385.) They had to keep history alive (Houtman, 1996: 319).

This call to remembrance must be seen in a broader context, namely the institution of the Feast of the Huts (Birch *et al*., 1999:129).Especially important is the fact that the Feast of Huts, like the Passover before it, and later the Feast of Weeks, became connected with an event in the history of salvation. It should be seen within the context of the theology of the saving God in history, as described by Westermann (1978:28). Irrespective of its earlier meanings, the essence of the feast was that the Israelites had to live in huts, says the Bible, in memory of the huts (*sukkôth)* in which Yahweh made their fathers live in the wilderness after the Exodus from Egypt.

The meaning is expressed in Leviticus 23:42-43, which reads as follows:

> *Live in booths for seven days. All native-born Israelites are to live in booths so your descendants will know that I had the Israelites*

live in booths when I brought them out of Egypt. I am the Lord your God.

They had to remember how God let them dwell in booths when He brought them out of Egypt and into the wilderness and how He cared for them. The specific meaning of the remembrance embodied in the feast, becomes apparent in the wilderness traditions in Exodus. Birch *et al*. (1999:128) points out that the wilderness traditions taught Israel about hardships and God's providence. They explain that the wilderness traditions immediately follow the deliverance at the sea, including the crises about adequate water (Exod. 15:22-27; 17:1-7) and sufficient food (Exod. 16:1-36). There are also the history of an attack by an enemy, the Amalekites (Exod. 17:8-16), and a narrative on Moses' reunion with his father-in-law, the Midianite priest Jethro, who helps him to organise the governance of the people Moses now led (Exod. 18:1-27). Birch *et al*. (1999:129) briefly notes the following important themes that appear in these initial wilderness encounters and which became lessons for their conduct as the people of God:

- God's salvation does not guarantee life without hardships. The world outside of bondage is also a world with dangers and struggles. Needs are not automatically met, and the lack of food and water for Israel carries the threat to the people's welfare into the most basic of human needs. In the context of such struggle, even bondage can begin to look attractive. Faced with the wilderness, some would choose the security of bondage over the struggle in freedom. This attitude becomes evident in Exodus 16:3: "If only we had died by the hand of the Lord in die land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread."
- In the wilderness struggle, the people turn on Moses, Aaron and God (Exod. 15:24; 16:3, 9; 17:2-4). This conflict is the beginning of a complex set of traditions concerning the people's complaint and rebellion in the wilderness that continues on through the Pentateuch. The memory of the Exodus deliverance is not enough to engender trust in the Lord's providence. Moses must increasingly intervene and mediate between his rebellious people and God (cf. Exod. 16:11-12; 17:4-7).
- God's people should remember that his response is gracious, merciful and providential. Only later in the wilderness traditions, the people's rebellion evokes God's anger and judgement. In the midst of these wilderness trials, the biblical narrative emphasizes, God's ability to provide for the people's needs. The resources to sustain life in the wilderness struggle come from God and are trustworthy. God's victory over the chaotic power of Pharaoh, who opposed God's creation, is now reflected in God's use of creation to give life in the wilderness.

- The manna narrative in Exodus 16 is especially important. Israel returns often to reflect on this history of the people's need and God's providence (Num. 11; Deut. 8; Josh. 5:12; Neh. 9:20; Ps. 78:24). Every day the people could trust that the manna would be available. It is Yahweh who gives the resources that provide life in the deadly dangers of wilderness, but Israel must trust in the reliability of God's provision and avoid the temptation to hoard or control the blessings God provides. The people of God had to learn to receive God's gifts. The attempt to grasp these gifts, is to lose them (Exod. 16:20; Birch *et al*., 1999:129).

The Ethical Principles

In summary the manna narrative taught the people of God's covenant the ethical principles of:

- work in order to live,
- rest from the daily labour;
- be willing to share God's gifts, compassionate and create a sharing community;
- consume what is needed and to avoid intemperance and overindulgence;
- be responsible stewards in the use and protection of God's creation;
- remember that it is God that provides.

These principles can be employed in a modern African society response to the contemporary socio-economic and political woes.

Secondly, scarcity, hunger and poverty promote a culture of selfishness and greed, because it results in a competitive lifestyle due to the fact that people want to emulate the lifestyles of the rich and prosperous.

These tendencies are signs of a new social pattern where the rich are becoming richer and the poor poorer. The privatisation of health care benefits only the affluent and the institution of business models in state welfare programmes leads to an enormous wave of corruption. Even churches are managed according to business models and as a result they loose sight of the poor and the marginalised.

Thirdly, the principle of rest is at stake in the struggle for survival. People need more money to pay for their increased consumption, and, therefore, they have to work longer and harder (Himes, 2007: 137). Businesses tend to operate with a skeleton staff in order to pay more to fewer and fewer employees. As a result the employees will have a bigger income and more to consume, but they have to work harder and longer. Job creation is thus at risk.

Instead of sharing the profits of the company to more employees with lower wages, the profits are spent on fewer employees with high wages. The urge to consume has

also lead to the burden of debt. People have to work harder and longer to pay their debt and cannot afford to have time for rest (cf. Conradie, 2009:38).

Fourthly, scarcity feeds on intemperance and overindulgence. The urge to earn more to consume, leads to a lifestyle of selfishness where sharing and caring are moved to the periphery of human interest. Consumerism excludes sharing with the poor and the future generation. Furthermore, it often paves the way for irresponsible labour practices, because where profits are concerned, the principles of fair labour practices can easily become compromised.

Lastly, excessive greed leads to environmental degradation, and this phenomenon has emerged as perhaps the major challenge facing humankind today (Coward, 1997:261). Coward (1997:266) explained as far back as 1997 that more and more natural resources are needed to fuel the ever-expanding global market, leaving less for future generations and producing more climate altering greenhouse gasses. Over the past decade the situation worsened *(*cf.Conradie, 2009:47).

SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPLICATIONS OF MANNA NARRATIVES IN EXODUS 16

Work in order to Live but also Rest from the Daily Labour

Humans are called to daily work in order to live, and as workers, people are agents of God in the cultivation and development of God's creation. Humankind may live from the produce of the land. However, daily labour is not an end in itself, but a means to the end of serving God. Labour is not a religion in itself, but part of the worship of God. Therefore, humans have to rest and this rest entails the enjoyment of all the splendour of life like being part of a community, family or other societal spheres; it is involved in the beauty of a fulfilled life and encompassing spirituality. Therefore, Christians should be agents in the promotion of fair labour practices and the development of an environment where all people can have the opportunity to lead a fulfilled life. Such an attitude will inevitably involve a critical stand against consumerism with its exploitation of people, especially the downtrodden and the needy.

Be Willing to Share God's Gifts, Be Compassionate

God's people must always be a sharing community. Therefore, Christians should be protagonists of the praxis of sharing. Society at large should be taught to share God's gifts, to be compassionate and to create a sharing community. Sharing and compassion must not only influence our individual ethics, but also enter the domain of political planning and policymaking. Politics should become one of sharing, where social institutions are transformed into tools conducive to sharing and compassion. In this respect, the ideology of neo-liberalism with its high estimation of consumption must

be revisited from a Christian ethical perspective in order to develop a responsible socio-economic critique.

Furthermore, the problem will not be solved only by the introduction of a few eco-friendly policies, because a total new lifestyle is needed. Humankind has to change its habits and this will entail a penetrating revision of consumption, values regarding wealth and prosperity, population-growth and the life of luxury and comfort. Society has to be converted from a mentality of consumerism to a responsible sober lifestyle on behalf of all creation. It is the duty of Christians to call for ecological repentance and a conversion to creation.

Remember and be Grateful to God that Provides

God's children have to keep remembrance alive and remain grateful to God as they were instructed in the manna-narratives. This remembrance is of God's saving actions and his deep involvement in human society (Moltmann, 1965:67). Remembrance must first of all be of the saving act of God. He is the God of salvation who changes and transforms situations and institutions distorted by the reality of evil for the better. He is the author of the history of the world and humankind Who establishes peace, love and dignity wherever these noble gifts are trampled upon. He brings new life where people experience hopelessness and despair. He sets new futures when people see no future at all (cf. Harvie, 2009:86).

This message was the main thrust of the feasts of the Old Testament and is still the essential preaching of the Holy Communion. The remembrance of God as the saving God is the source of hope for people in despair, and is the motivation for societies in their planning for the future. Christians and churches have the calling to keep this remembrance alive and to translate it into a message of hope for the poor, the oppressed and the future generation as Moltmann (1965) explains in his classic and influential study. He inspires a new enthusiasm for a relevant Christian message of hope based on the confession of God as the saving God in history.

At the same time remembrance must also be a remembrance of the reality of evil and humankind's bondage in sin (Jones, 1995:59; Bash, 2007:13). This bondage is a reality because of humankind's desire to become like God, but instead we became a god against God (Bonhoeffer, 1995:23). This is the reason for the ever-present pockets of hatred, injustices, oppression and exploitation. Evil breeds social injustices such as slavery, institutionalised racism and xenophobia, sexism, discrimination against the poor, human trafficking, aggressive wars, genocides, ecocide and all other forms of degradation of humanity. Remembrance, as expressed in the manna narratives, brought this reality to light and calls upon the people of God to repent, confess and struggle against evil – also the evils of consumerism. Christians today have to keep remembrance alive like the manna in the jar in the Exodus history.

Conclusion

The ethical imperatives of the manna narratives are indeed necessary for any socio-economic policy to succeed. However, present economic hardship, political instability challenge everyone to reconsider their lifestyles in such an environment. Taking to heart the ethical principles of Exodus 16, they have to be good stewards of God's gifts, responsible for how they use resources, aware of the fact that what they do affects others (Himes, 2007:142). Furthermore, we have to keep alive the remembrance and be grateful to God as a caring God who is concerned about humankind and his creation, and who calls upon humans to share in this concern by their actions of love, service and caring.

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