what is he?

To translate מָן הוּא *mahn hu* as “what is this?” may give good sense in English, but is against the Hebrew grammar, since the Hebrew for “what” is not **mahn** but **mah** (The Pulpit Commentary, Volume 1). The phrase מָן הוּא (mahn hu) means, “Mahn is he” or “he is Mahn” (where Mahn is the bread-like substance). However, if the text originally read, מָה הוּא (mah hu), then this would be translated as “What is he,” which explains the next phrase which states, “given that they did not know what he was,” where “what he was” is מָה הוּא in Hebrew. – Footnote #397 from Jeff Benner’s Mechanical Translation of Exodus