"And on that same day, they ate the produce of the land, unleavened cakes and parched grain. And the manna ceased on the day after they ate of the produce of the land; and the Israelites had manna no more, but they ate of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year." (Jos.5:11,12)

The manna which God provided as food for his people during the forty years of wilderness wandering must have been a most unusual substance. From what we know about nutrition today it must have contained the basic food ingredients of protein, carbohydrates and fat. The human being requires these substances in order to survive. Additionally it had to contain all of the essential minerals, electrolytes and vitamins. Manna contained everything which man needed except water and the water was supplied by "the Rock which followed them". "And all ate the same spiritual food and they all drank the same supernaturally given drink. For they drank from a spiritual Rock which followed them---produced by the sole power of God Himself without natural instrumentality--and the Rock was Christ". I Cor. 10: 3,4.

Manna was termed bread in Exodus 16:4 and God said He would "rain bread from the heavens". He also said that He would use manna to prove the children of Israel "Whether they will walk in my law or not". Manna was to be gathered each morning an omer for each person. None was to be left until morning. However "some of them left of it until morning and it bred worms, became foul and stank". Strangely, this did not happen on the Sabbath when twice as much was gathered on the sixth day so that men could rest on the Sabbath and eat the manna which had been baked and boiled on the sixth day.

Manna appeared in the morning after the dew had gone and "lay upon the face of the wilderness" as a "fine, round and flake-like thing". It had to be gathered every morning "for when the sun became hot it melted". It was "like coriander seed, white and it tasted like wafers made with honey". In Psalm 78: 24,25 manna is called heaven's grain and angels' food. It was of such importance to the Lord that an omer of manna was placed in the ark of the covenant to be kept through the generations. Where ever the ark is today--the manna is still there!

Jesus was the Rock in the wilderness. He also is the "Bread of Life". In John 6:47 Jesus tells us "I assure you, he who believes in Me now possesses eternal life. I am the Bread of Life. Your forefathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and yet they died. But this is the Bread that comes down from heaven, so that anyone may eat of it and never die. I Myself am this Living Bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this Bread, he will live forever, and also the Bread that I shall give for the life of the world is My body". When these words disturbed Jesus' disciples He then said to them (John 6:63) "It is the Spirit that gives life, the flesh conveys no benefit whatever. The words that I have been speaking to you are spirit and life".

When the children of Israel traversed the river Jordan and entered the land of Canaan they found it no longer necessary to depend upon God's miraculous provision of manna. The food which they found was "unleavened cakes and parched corn". Certainly this food was far inferior to the grain of heaven which had sustained them for forty years. However, they had grown tired of manna and had previously complained about their food asking for meat--and longing for the food of Egypt. So--even though the corn was parched and the cakes flat and unappetizing and hardly nutritious they ate the human food gladly and the next morning there was no manna from heaven, nor has there been to this day.
Jesus told His disciples that He is the Living Bread which came down from heaven. As manna gave life and nutrients to the children of Israel, Jesus gave and continues to give to those who eat of His Life eternal. Today we see the members of Christ's Body---the Church---turning to sources of life which are natural and of human origin. The parched corn of modern man is old dried up chestnut mash of humanism, socialism, spiritualism occultism, drug and alcoholism, TM, psychic and soul cultism, etc, etc. Dr. Moody once said that the pigeons will come and try out sawdust instead of grain but they will not come back. However---human beings can be fed "sawdust" (ersatz gospel) and keep coming back wondering why they are sick and dying. How many churches are giving out the heavenly manna---spiritual food---the words of Christ today? Or are they giving out parched corn or sawdust? The penalty could be that the manna can cease to fall---and we could well not even realize it---until too late.

In ancient Israel the power of the manna lasted until the time of Jeremiah when finally the power of God had so diminished that Israel and the Rock was defeated and carried off to Babylon. Strangely it is a historic fact that the Pilgrims landing on what is now Cape Cod found on the shore a large iron pot full of parched corn. Since the arrival of this Christian group and those who followed them there has been a gradual diminution in the power of the Holy Ghost in this "new promised land" of Canada and the USA. We have not fallen to the Babylonia captivity as yet---but God will not be mocked---and the time has come to return to the God of our fathers---to the faith that built the nation---to the Lord Christ-His manna-His living water. Why do we not return to His Kingdom-His precepts-His Life and His Word. On every hand we see the disaster of trying to live life excluding God and His Word.

"Behold, now is truly the time for a gracious welcome and acceptance; behold, now is the day of salvation!"(II Cor: 6:2). "Choose you this day whom you will serve".(Jos. 24:15).

****WSR****