

**MANNA AND MIRACLES**  
**Exo.16:4-26; Josh.5:10-12**  
**Ac.2:14-38; 1Cor.12:28-13:10**  
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**I. INTRODUCTION**

1. There is an important lesson to be learned from and a parallel to be drawn between God's miraculous feeding of the children of Israel with manna from heaven in the wilderness after they left Egyptian bondage on their journey to the promise land of Canaan during the O.T. period, and God's giving miraculous gifts of the Spirit to Christians in the early N.T. church.
2. Concerning the manna, there was a point in time when God began to miraculously feed the children of Israel, and there was a point in time when he ceased to so feed them.
3. Some questions concerning God's feeding them with manna from heaven.
  - a. When did God begin to so feed them?
  - b. Why did God feed them in this manner? Why was it necessary?
  - c. How long did God feed them manna from heaven?
  - d. When did he cease to so feed them?
  - e. Why did he cease to so feed them? Why was it no longer necessary?
4. Some questions concerning miraculous gifts of the Spirit given to members of the N.T. church.
  - a. When did the possession of such Spiritual gifts begin as a reality?
  - b. Why were they given? What function did they serve?
  - c. Why were such gifts necessary?
  - d. Were they designed to be a permanent part of and function in the N.T. church?
  - e. If not, when did such gifts cease to be given? Why?
5. With such things in mind, and with Bible answers to the questions raised, we will be able to see and appreciate the lesson to be learned from and the parallel to be drawn between the manna of the O.T. and the miracles of the N.T., especially the place and function of the miraculous Spiritual gifts in the N.T. church.

**II. DISCUSSION**

**A. 1<sup>ST</sup> THE MANNA FROM HEAVEN.**

1. When did God begin to feed the children of Israel with manna from heaven? Exo.12:40,51; 13:1-3; 16:1-4,5-26.
2. How long did he feed them with manna from heaven and when did he cease to do so?
  - a. God continued to feed them with manna from heaven for the entire forty (40) years they were in the wilderness wanderings.
  - b. However, in the days of Joshua, who succeeded Moses as their leader, and after they had crossed over the Jordan river, entered Canaan, camped at Gilgal, and ceased their wilderness wanderings, the manna from heaven ended, Josh.5:10-12.
3. Why did God feed the children of Israel with manna from heaven during their wilderness wanderings, but ceased to do so once they entered Canaan and began to eat of the fruit of the land?
  - a. The answer is obvious and simple, is it not?
    - (1) During their wilderness wanderings for 40 years there was no feed supply available for Israel.
    - (2) They were on their journey to Canaan, constantly on the move; consequently, there was no natural food supply for them, and there was no time to stop, cultivate the land and harvest a crop to provide food for themselves.
    - (3) There was a need for it, thus it began to be done.
    - (4) But once they crossed the Jordan river and entered Canaan, the land that flowed with “milk and honey,” ample natural food supply was readily available.
    - (5) Therefore, there was no longer a need for God to miraculously feed them with manna from heaven. So it ceased!
4. In God’s plan for man’s spiritual as well as his physical well-being and his dealing with man, he on his part has always done only what was necessary, and that only when and where it was necessary.
5. That was true in physical Israel’s wilderness wondering period. It is also true in spiritual Israel today.

**B. NOW TO AN OBVIOUS PARALLEL TO BE DRAWN BETWEEN THE MANNA FROM HEAVEN AND MIRACULOUS GIFTS OF**

## **THE SPIRIT IN THE N.T. CHURCH, THE SPIRITUAL ISRAEL OF TODAY.**

1. There was a period of time when members of the N.T. churches needed were given and possessed miraculous, Spiritual gifts; i.e., a time when miraculous, Spiritual gifts existed and functioned in the N.T. church, spiritual Israel, 1Cor.12:4-11,28. Cf. Gal.6:16.
  - a. This was in fulfillment of a promise made by Jesus Christ himself, as well as O.T. prophecy and promise, Mk.16:15-18; Joel.2:28-32; Ac.2:14-21,36-38.
  - b. In addition to Spiritual gifts possessed by members of the N.T. church, the Apostles of Christ were promised, given and possessed miraculous powers of the Holy Spirit, Jno.14:26; 15:26,27; 16:7,13-15; 20:19-23; Lk.24:48,49; Ac.1:4-8; 2:1-4.
2. What was the purpose of the miraculous powers of the Holy Spirit through the Apostles of Christ, and the Spiritual gifts given to and functioning through the members of N.T. churches? Why were they needed?
  - a. Through the Apostles it was to confirm the Word of God and the divine authenticity of the apostolic message, Mk.16:19,20; Heb.2:3,4; 2Cor.12:12.
  - b. Through the members it enabled them to carry on their work during the period of progressive revelation of God's will while God's plan to man in the Scheme of Redemption was being completed by the Spirit-inspired apostles when we would have the perfected law of liberty in its completeness in written form.
    - (1) Remember:
      - (a) During this period, the apostles could not be every where in all places at all times where local churches existed and carried on their God-ordained work and worship.
      - (b) Therefore, the members needed Spiritual gifts in order to perform their work and worship in the absence of the presence of an apostle in their midst and in the absence of the completed and written revelation of God's perfect law of liberty as we now have it in the N.T. Cf. 1Cor.12:4-12; 14:4,5,12,26-31-33; Jas.1:25
3. When did miraculous Spiritual gifts through Christians cease and why? 1Cor.12:28-13:10.

- a. See Jude 3. Cf. Jno.16:13; Jas.1:25; Eph.3:1-5; 2Tim.3:16-4:5.
- b. Therefore, there was and is no longer any need for miraculous gifts of the Spirit in the church.
- c. There being no need for them, they ceased.
- d. They served purpose just as the Law of Moses served its purpose and ceased and just as the manna served its purpose and ceased.

### **III. CONCLUSION**

1. All can understand when and why God fed the children of Israel with manna from heaven and why and when he ceased to feed them with manna from heaven.
2. Is not the parallel we have drawn between the manna of the wilderness wanderings and the miracles of the early N.T. church obvious as to the when and why, etc.?
3. Therefore, all should be able to understand when and why God by means of the Holy Spirit empowered the Apostle of Christ with miraculous power and also through Spiritual gifts empowered the early Christian with the means to perform their God-ordained work and worship until such a time as the will of God was completely revealed and written down by means of the Spirit-filled, Spirit-guided Apostles of Christ in the book identified as the N.T. as their perfect spiritual guide, at which time such miraculous powers and gifts were no longer needed and therefore ceased to exist.
4. Once God's will or word had been completely revealed and miraculously confirmed there was and is no longer any more need for further confirmation; for once confirmed, always confirmed!

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