

Francis Turretin

ON MANNA

1 Cor. 10:3

I. "Since whatever things were written before were written for our instruction, that through patience and the consolation of the Scriptures we might have hope," as the divine teacher of the Gentiles admonishes in holiness, Romans 15:4, that nothing is more worthy of his study, nothing more conducive to the salvation of the faithful, judging the New Testament θεόπνευστος [divinely inspired], they were like expert Scribes, educated in the kingdom of heaven, "bringing forth out of his treasure things new and old," Matt. 13:52, so that by comparing the Old Testament with the New from time to time, the types with the truth, and the oracles with their fulfillment, they might assert more strongly the divinity of both. And by frequent reflection upon the Israelite Church, recalling from past examples the promises and threats made to the Fathers in it, the Christian should, as in a mirror, be presented an image, either in regard to God, our benefits and duties, or in regard to rewards and punishments reserved for good and evil.

II. This, indeed, Paul did more than once for the instruction of the faithful in his Epistles, but this was especially carried out at the beginning of the tenth chapter to the Corinthians, where, in order to exhort them from the various sins in which they were involved, especially in the eating of sacrifices to idols, he recalls them to consider the people of Israel who wandered in the desert, and a review is made of the various good things conferred upon them, not unlike that which was conferred on them gratuitously, in which the Christians boasted, both of the sins they had admitted, and of the punishments inflicted on

them by God. But he mentions three benefits of God that are particularly remarkable above the rest, which were in the place of the extraordinary sacraments themselves, "the baptism of the cloud and the sea, spiritual food or manna, water from the rock," the first of which corresponds to our baptism, the two latter to the Christian eucharist. And indeed, this has already been dealt with in the previous Disputation; We must now deal with two others, first Manna, which is mentioned first by the Apostle.

**III.** His words are in verse 3, chapter 10, "They all ate the same spiritual food." The aim of the Apostle, as already intimated, is to turn the Corinthians away from the profane allurements of gluttony and the feasts of idols, to which they were enticed by the Heathen, based on the argument drawn from the example of the ancient Israelites, who could not escape the Divine Judge of these sins. Indeed, because in the examples the difference, if anything, overturns the force of the comparison, and the Corinthians could accept that their condition was far superior to the state of the Israelites, that they were baptized, and that they partook of the holy supper, and that they obtained many other prerogatives in the New Testament which were by no means granted to the Ancients, so that the argument could not be legitimately drawn from them at once. Paul, in order to take away from them that empty boast, by which they thought they were in a better place with God than the Ancients, shows the equality of the state of the Israelites with that of the Christians. That the covenant of God and the Church were with them, no less than with the Corinthians, that they were affected by the same benefits, and that they had the same sacraments, which were to them evidences of the grace of God. Hence, if Israel could not escape punishment by abusing their possessions, nor would

the Christians turn away punishment, if they, too, committed the same sins. But this equality derives above all from the identity of the Sacraments, which both obtained, if not by reason of signs, at least by reason of signification. He already shows it with respect to the Supper, and indeed, with respect to both symbols, both with respect to food and drink.

**IV.** And of the food, concerning which the present Disputation is instituted, he says that *All*, that is, the Israelites, *ate spiritual food*, looking to the *Manna*, with which God once wished to feed them in the wilderness; of which two things are now to be considered, (1) History, (2) Mystery; for it can and must be considered under the twin σχέσει [relation] by reason of common use, in so far as it was material and corporeal food, which served for the nourishment of the people, and by reason of its sacred use, by which it was spiritual and mystical, which signified and sealed Christ.

**V.** The story is told, Exodus 16, when the flour, which they had brought from Egypt, failed, and because of the scarcity of food the people murmured against Moses, so much so that they even suffered death inflicted by the hand of Jehovah. *Would that, they say, we had died by the hand of Jehovah in the land of Egypt!* Although God could placate an ungrateful people, yet with wonderful goodness He foresees their need, but in a completely extraordinary way, by sending every day the heavenly Manna, which would suffice to feed such a multitude; and thus, for the whole forty years, while the people were engaged in the wilderness, it would sustain them until they reached Canaan, at which time Manna is said to have ceased, verse 35. As for this food, (1) the Israelites had to collect it in the morning before the sun rose, Exodus

16:21, and that for the purpose of it being their food, verses 16, 18, each day only, verse 4, because none of it was to be left over for the next day, verses 19-20, with the exception of the sixth day, on which enough was to be gathered for two days, because it did not fall on the seventh day, that is, on the Sabbath, verses 23, 26. (2) They were to distribute that which was collected, so that each one of them would have one homer assigned to him, which was the tenth part of an ephah and, according to Johann Heinrich Waser was similar to the new Roman pound, and no one was allowed to have more or less, verses 16-18. (3) Food preparation; which was done, both by grinding, then by cooking, and then by boiling: for they ground or rubbed the manna, and afterwards cooked or boiled it, and made from it cakes of ashes, verse 23; Numbers 11:8. Now the Manna is described as to its substance, that it fell small and thin, like frost on the ground, verse 21 [14], as to its shape, round as a coriander seed, verse 31, as to its color, white, verse 31, as the color of the Arabian bdellium, which is transparent, Numbers 11: 7, as to the taste, very sweet and pleasant, like the taste of flour with honey, or like the taste of the most excellent liquid made from oil, Numbers 11:8, and therefore, the most excellent and healthiest food. However, we do not, therefore, easily admit that the author of the book of Wisdom, chapters 16 and 20, speaking of Manna, was food, "full of all pleasure and adapted to every taste," although this was readily accepted by some Fathers who delight in allegories. For apart from the fact that Moses expressly mentions its special taste, if it was adapted to the taste of everyone, why then did they refuse it in the desert? Our eyes see nothing but manna, then to what purpose did they still desire Egyptian meat and food?

**VI.** But the history of this miracle may give occasion to various questions, of which we shall touch only a few. (1) Why did God want to provide for the needs of the people in this way? I answer: Although God's will alone should be the highest reason for us, yet there is no doubt that He wanted to give this singular testimony of His paternal Providence, so that He might teach that He never lacks for the pious who labor, but always provides for them in good time, and even uses extraordinary means where ordinary ones fail. And thus man should not live by bread alone, but by everything that proceeds from the mouth of God, which Moses insinuates, Deut. 8:3, "And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna, which you did not know, nor did your fathers know, that he might make you know that man does not live by bread alone, but man lives by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord." And to make it clear that God's favor was not half perfect, during the whole forty years that they were engaged in the desert He fed them with this bread, supplementing by the favor of heaven, which the barrenness of the Sun denied, until they came to Canaan, and there they began to eat from the fruits of the land, Exodus 16:35, Joshua 5:12; for where ordinary means are available, extraordinary miracles should not be sought or expected. "Extraordinaries cease," says J. C., [John Calvin?] "where there is place for the ordinary." Secondly, men should not be ungrateful of any heavenly gift, for the Israelites, even in their need, did not have a sufficiently grateful heart. And to that end He willed that one portion of the manna should be kept in a golden urn beside the Ark throughout all ages, Exodus 16:32-33, so that it would be a most illustrious testimony to be celebrated by posterity.

**VII.** Secondly, as to the name, it is asked why this food is called manna, for when it was first dropped from heaven and was seen by the Israelites, it was called manna. Moses, Exodus 16:15, testifies, "And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, It is manna: for they knew not what it was," and verse 31, "And the children of Israel called its name Manna." There are two opinions of theologians regarding the reasoning behind such a name. The first of those interpret the words of verse 18 [sic: 15] *interrogatively*, meaning that when the Hebrews saw the Divine bread, the Israelites were so shocked by its unfamiliarity and strangeness that they burst out in amazement with these words, 'What is this?' and afterwards this name remained, and passed into an appellative. Thus, the LXX renders it, τι ἔστι τούτο [what is this?], thus the Chaldean Paraphrase, the ancient versions, Josephus' *Antiquities*, book 3, chapter 1, "The Hebrews call this food manna, for manna is an interrogative according to our dialect signifying, 'what is this?'; thus Jerome, and many of the ancients. This opinion seems to be confirmed by Moses, who, answering the question of the people, said to them, "This is the bread which Jehovah has given you to eat." The Egyptian language says the same thing as the Hebrew, according to Drusins out of R. Hiskuni. Nor should it seem surprising if the Israelites, who lived in Egypt for so many years, had used a portion of this language.

**VIII.** The second opinion of those who take the words as *indicative* is that the proper noun should be designated as that which is derived from the Hebrew root meaning 'to arrange, to establish, to prepare,' so that with respect to the last Hebrew root it is the same as 'a part, a portion, a gift,' that is, given by God, or food ordered by God and arranged and prepared without their labor, for whose use the Israelites

should neither sow nor reap. This is how the Hebrews of today, such as Rabbi Solomon, feel that the preparation of food is from the *'rerbo'* [?] because they did not know what it was, that is, "they did not know what name to call it," so Aben Ezra, "manna is derived from the Hebrew word [?]" whence Daniel 1, "[this Hebrew word] ordinarily constitutes 'meat;'" R. D. K. R. Bechai, and others feel the same. Although it is true that the reasoning of either opinion is acceptable, the latter seems to approach the truth of the matter more properly.

**IX.** Thirdly, it may be asked, whether this manna was natural or indeed miraculous? According to some philosophers, certain natural manna is stored among the watery meteors, according to philosophers, and which is produced from the dew of the most temperate heavenly place, which falls on the leaves of trees and bushes and adheres to them until collected. This is chiefly done in three regions, Syria, Germany, and Italy, whence, from the difference of the regions, it is called Syrian, Germanic, and Calabrian, the latter being recommended above all others in medicine, for the gentle purgation of bile and phlegm without flatulence, on which the sons of physicians are consulted.....

**X.** Although we do not want to make this our dispute, which looks more closely at the physicists and the sons of Hippocrates, we nevertheless observe a few, who seem to us to be the truer opinion, who, although they think that there is a great affinity between the two manna as to form, color, and taste, yet do not think that it can be said of the same kind. But in fact, the Israelite manna was miraculous and extraordinary. First, because if it had been natural, it could not have been said that it was completely unknown to the Israelites, when Moses testifies, "Neither they nor their fathers knew this," Deut. 8:3. Secondly, there

would have been no need to place it in a golden urn near the area of the miracle monument, if it had been a natural thing. Thirdly, medicinal manna does not fall throughout the year, but only during the maximum temperature of the air and sky, for example in the springtime, in March and April. But this manna was eaten equally in all the months of the year, and no change of air could prevent it from falling evenly throughout the whole forty years. Fourthly, it always falls in the same way and at the same time; but the divine day did not fall at all on the seventh day; and on the sixth day its quantity was doubled, so that another homer was added to the food of the Sabbath for nourishment. Fifthly, medicinal manna is not in itself a food that has the power to nourish, but a drug or medicine that has a purgative power. But Divine manna was the sweetest and most temperate food, which was easy to digest, and did not burden the body like other foods. But not medicinal, otherwise it would not have been possible for them to feed on it, without dislocating their bodies and perishing in their health, unless someone agrees with Francisco Valles that this food could have had the power of excrement, to cleanse the humors which they had contracted in Egypt by the use of melons, cucumbers, and leeks, but afterwards, by custom, they moved away to food acceptable to them. Sixthly, natural manna does not putrefy at night, does not produce worms, does not melt in the sun, and is not hard, so that it must be crushed, so that cakes can be made from it, as did the Divine. Seventhly, divine manna fell wherever they encamped, and wherever they went this blessing of God accompanied them. However, when the neighboring nations were fed with corn, and though the manna was so well known in the camp of the Israelites, as soon as they entered the fruitful and wild land of corn, it ceased. Thus, whether we pay attention to the properties of the



heavenly gift, or the place in which it was given, or the time, or the amount, or the continuation, it is not obscure nor unclear that God's favor, granted to the Israelite people for a time by a miracle, was extraordinary.

**XI.** More could be asked about the quantity, shape, color, and taste of manna, as well as about its collection and distribution. But because these are foreign to our intent, it is better that we come to its sacred use, and scrutinize the mystery hidden underneath its shell; to which Paul leads us when he calls it *spiritual food*. It is indeed called so, not by nature, for it was corporeal and material, but both in origin and in signification. In the first place, because it was miraculously provided by God, who is called κατ' ἐξοχὴν [par excellence] Spirit, not by human works, but by supernatural means, or because it was prepared by the ministry of spirits, that is, angels. Whence it is called the bread of the angels, or of the mighty, Psalm 78:25, not that the angels were fed with it, who, as disembodied spirits, have no need of bodily food, but that it was supplied by the angels to the people at the behest of God. For since the matter was so extraordinary as to be miraculous, as has been said, there is no doubt that God made use of the ministry of the angels, both to transport material suitable for that generation from all sides, and to expose it to the sun, that it might more easily fall and be cooked.

**XII.** Secondly, it is significantly called spiritual because it had a mystical and spiritual meaning, of course, since Christ represented the true bread of life. For, at first, the appearance of the manna given by God seen by the people was simply that of bodily food to appease their hunger, so that coarse and profane men would not look upon it as anything else, yet God intended a deeper mystery, and the faithful,

who were more attentive to the works of God, saw a more sublime mystery in this miracle: they saw faith, and they recognized manna as the excellent *type* of Christ as food for the soul: how bread and wine, which by their nature and by themselves serve to nourish the body, are nevertheless destined by the grace of God for a spiritual and sacred use, so that they are symbols of the body and blood of Christ, by which souls are sustained, not physically, but only by a mysterious moral change. Nor does Christ allow us to doubt Him, who, in John 6, holds out to us the key to this whole mystery, while presenting and comparing the manna, He clearly teaches us His body was signified by that type, and the truth of that figure. To which He also not obscurely refers to Revelation 2:17, when He promises to the overcomer, "to give himself from the hidden manna," signifying by this symbol, of course, His salutary communion both in grace and in glory.

**XIII.** Nor does it stand in the way of this explanation, that Christ, John 6:49, speaks of manna as corruptible and material food which could not render the Fathers immune from death: "Your Fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead." [He could say this] Because the sacraments can be considered either as belonging to matter, according to their nature; or as theoretical, according to their signification. In the former sense, manna was really bodily food intended for the nourishment of bodies. But the latter is properly called spiritual, because it signified something spiritual. It is one thing to speak about something as a fallible human, that is, from a hypothesis of opinion, considering the capacity of those with whom we are dealing. It is another thing to speak the truth of the matter. Thus, Paul does not always speak of circumcision in the same way. For when he considers the institution of God in her, he says that its prerogative and benefit is

great, Romans 3:1, because it was a seal of the righteousness of faith, Romans 4:11. But when he argues against those who glorified in an external sign laid bare, and placed in it a perverted confidence of salvation, he says it is *nothing*, Gal. 6:15; indeed, it is a symbol of a curse, because those men bind themselves to keep the whole Law, Gal. 5:3. In the same way Christ compares His actions with the Jews; For when the carnal multitude preferred Moses by far to Christ, who had miraculously fed the people for 40 years in the wilderness, looking for no other significance in the manna than food for the body, seeking no other explanation, Christ does not explain what He meant in His answer, but, leaving aside everything else, He adapts His speech to the understanding of the listeners, as if He were saying, "Moses is of the highest value to you, because he filled the bellies of your Fathers in the desert. For this one thing you make objection to me; Therefore, I am worthless to you, because I have not supplied you with food for your stomach. But if you make so much ado about perishable food, what is to be said about the bread of life with which souls are nourished for eternal life?" Thus, Christ does not so much attend to the truth of the matter, as He speaks from the hypothesis of the hearers. But when Paul calls it spiritual food, he does not regard the abuse of the ungodly, but rather the ordination by God of the true institution of the sacrament.

**XIV.** And the ancients observe this reason for naming it more than once, as Augustine in Psalm 77, "they all indeed ate the same spiritual food and drank the same spiritual drink, that is, something signifying something spiritual, and treatise 26 on John, "Manna and the altar were sacraments with different signs, but equal in what is signified, different in visible appearance, equal in spiritual power; For the Fathers ate the same spiritual food as we do." Thus, Anselm in this passage,

"The same meat of the body of Christ, which we now eat in bread, our fathers ate in manna, and the same drink of the blood of Christ, which we drink from the cup, they drank from the rock; and therefore they ate the same spiritual food as we; but the other corporeal, because they understood the visible meat spiritually, they hungered spiritually, they tasted spiritually, that they might be spiritually satisfied, for we also receive visible food," etc. So, Rev. 11:8, the great city is *spiritually* called Sodom and Egypt.

**XV.** And the scruple that can be raised from this is easily resolved: how all the Israelites are said to have eaten this spiritual food; since it is certain, from the succession of history, and from the words of the Apostles themselves, that some of them were profane and impious, who could not be approved by God, but whom He severely punished for their crimes in the desert, 1 Cor. 10:5. For although they did not eat that spiritual food, that is, not only with the mouth of the body to feed the stomach, but also by receiving it by faith as Christ *ισημαντικόν* [giving a sign] and *σφραγιστικόν* [sealing] because this applies only to the faithful, yet they could be said to have eaten that food which it is spiritual and sacramental, although they themselves do not perceive it as such.

**XVI.** But in order that we may understand more certainly why this food is called spiritual because of the mystery of its meaning, proper reasons must be considered. It should not be doubted that, in general, manna can be connected with the Word of God, which is for our souls, as long as we sojourn in the desert of the world, the heavenly food, the sweetest, and the most wholesome, as more than once under that symbol the Holy Spirit presents it to us, Psalm 19:11, John 4:32, 34;

Heb. 5:13-14, that we should never prefer leeks and onions, or other Egyptian wisdom, nor the husks of human traditions, in which is far more truly fulfilled what Ben Sira said about manna, that it accommodates itself to every taste, because each one finds, according to the truth of fixed and chance events, that which to support himself, which Origen's Homily 7 in Exodus does not badly explain, "If you accept the word of God that is preached in the Church with all faith, with all devotion, the word itself will become for you whatever you desire; if you are sad, it consoles you, saying, God does not reject a broken and humbled heart. If you rejoice because of the hope of the future, joy accumulates for you, saying, Rejoice and be joyful, exult the righteous; if you are hot-tempered, he soothes you, saying, Cease from anger and forsake indignation." So then the manna of the word of God tastes in your mouth whatever flavor you desire. However, if anyone receives this unbelievably and does not eat it, but hides it, worms will spring up from it, and the Lord, who is to the faithful the sweetness of honey in manna, becomes worms to the unbelieving.

**XVII.** But it is certain that it in form it looked particularly to Christ, and that it was an excellent symbol of Him, and, indeed, the most important of these three: (1) in origin and cause, (2) in nature and properties, (3) in uses and effects.

(1) As to the origin. For it came down from heaven and was given by God out of undue grace and liberality without working for it, without human effort, nor with any merit, whence Moses said to the Israelites, "This is the bread which Jehovah has given us to eat," Exodus 16:15. Thus, Christ is truly said to have come down from heaven, as a gift from God the Father, John 3:16 and 6:33, completely gratuitous, acquired by

no effort or merit of ours, lest we here dream of anything Pharisaic and Papistic, but granted only by God's mercy. The manna did not fall naturally, but supernaturally and miraculously. Thus. Christ is given to us by a miracle from God, not by the force of nature, but by grace, so that the great mystery of piety may be referred here. Manna was given with the dew of heaven, Exodus 16:14, and Christ is planted in the dew, Hosea 14:5, *I am like the dew*, he says to Israel, because it moistens our dry hearts, and restores and refreshes the scorched ones with a sense of God's wrath, hence the Song of Solomon 5:1 [5:2], to the Bride He says, "Open to me, my sister, my friend, my dove, for my head is full of dew, my hair with the drops of the night." As for the manna, it was not given in Egypt, but in the desert, after they had been freed from the most severe slavery by the mighty hand of God and had crossed the Red Sea. Thus, those whom Christ freed from the Egypt of the world, and redeemed with His own blood, nourishes them as they drink the milk of the Word and eat the bread of His body.

**XVIII.** (2) As to its nature and qualities, the manna was of a whitish color, and of a very sweet taste. Christ is called shining white by the bride, Song of Solomon 5:9 [5:10] because of the innocence of life, because "he is holy, innocent, separated from sinners," Heb. 7:26, who knows no sin, 2 Cor. 5:21, in whose mouth was no guile found, 1 Peter 2:22, whose goodness and grace is the sweetest taste to sinners, "taste and see how good Jehovah is," Psalm 34:9 [34:8], and therefore, the bride wants more of his "fruits [which] are sweet to my palate," says Song of Solomon 2:3. And as manna it was the most excellent and most temporary food for the body with which the people were supported in the desert. Thus, the Divine Christ is the food for the soul, the true bread of God, the bread of life, who gives life to the world, by which we

are fed in the desert of the world, who is freely giving of the manna, presenting it perfectly in Himself, that it may have every flavor, because He was made all things for us by the Father, light, food, clothing, medicine, everything, Col. 3:11.

**XIX.** (3) As for its use and effects, the manna had to be gathered by the people before they could feed on it. The faithful must receive Christ by faith, that He may nourish us. That which was collected was distributed equally to each, Christ the food of life is distributed according to the measure of faith, Eph. 4:7, so that the whole should belong equally to all, both to the poor and to the rich, small and great, men and women, slaves and free. "There is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all," Col. 3:11. Manna was prepared for food by first grinding at the mill, then by cooking on the hearth. Christ was consecrated by afflictions, Heb. 2:10, bruised by the cross and tribulation because of our iniquities, Isaiah 53:8, 12, that He might become the saving food of our souls. Manna was abhorrent to the Israelites, although it was the sweetest food. Consequently, carnal and profane men abhor and reject Christ, to whom He seems a stumbling block and foolishness, 1 Cor. 1:23. The manna was to be kept in a golden urn before the Ark at the entrance of the sanctuary, as a perpetual memorial of the matter. Thus, Christ the victor must be placed in the golden urn of the heart of the faithful, which is the Shrine of God, to recall with perpetual gratitude the memory of such a favor.

**XX.** And it is relevant that in Rev. 2:17, it is said of the hidden manna that Christ promises to give to the overcomer, that they may be opposed to the children of the Balaamites and Nicolaitans who enticed

Christians to eat sacrifices to idols, and to teach them not to tolerate this because He forbids them such idolatrous feasts; since it is far more sumptuous and salutary to give the overcomers the spiritual food of grace and glory, and the immortal delights of Paradise in His communion, which far surpasses any banquet, no matter how luxurious. Now he alludes to those things given the victors, for it is certain the Winners or Victors in the five yearly Grecian contests were striving for a variety of prizes. Among other things, they were given pre-eminence in the contests, invitations and food from the public, as representatives of Athens, they earned a well-deserved seat in government from which it had its name, because there the public goods were kept hidden in granaries, as if to say, πυρού ταμείον [storehouses of wheat]. The Hellanodicae [judges of the games] voted with white stones when pronouncing the victors. Therefore, the Agonotheta [the Heavenly Judge] promises the heavenly conquerors of the temptations of the Nicolaitans because they despised the idolaters, not a little in the these [spiritual] games, but [the reward of] heavenly manna, not stored in the Ark of the Covenant, but hidden near God where it can never be corrupted. He therefore calls Himself, with His benefits, the hidden manna, referring to the manna which had to be stored in the golden urn, to be kept in the sanctuary before Jehovah, which He would make fourfold:

(1) In the Word, because "Christ is naturally hidden to men," who are unable to reach knowledge of Him without revelation, "for the man living in the flesh does not grasp the things that are of God," 1 Cor. 2:14, and "flesh and blood does not reveal Him to us," the mystery of Christ, but only the heavenly Father, Matt. 16:17; 11:25-26, and 13:11, which is therefore called, "a mystery hidden from the Gentiles,"



Romans 16:25, because it contains things "which eyes have not seen, nor ears heard, and which have not entered into the heart of man," 1 Cor. 2:9. Again, it is said to be hidden in reference to the reprobate, to whom it has not been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, Matt. 11:25, and 13:11, and to whom the Gospel is hidden, 2 Cor. 4:3. Finally, He is hidden from the faithful themselves, who can never fully know Him in this life, but only look at Him under a veil and in an enigma, 1 Cor. 13:12, because they walk by faith, not by sight, 2 Cor. 5:7.

(2) In the sacraments, because there Christ is hidden under external symbols, not physically, but morally, and offers Himself not to the senses, but to the mind, to be grasped by faith.

(3) In the heart, because Christ dwells in our hearts through faith, Eph. 3:17, where it is not seen by others, but is felt by the soul of the faithful through the incredible comfort with which it is deepened, and through that new name of the Son of God, which He marks for us, which no one knows, except he who has received it, Rev. 2:17.

(4) In heaven, because Christ was taken up into heaven before our eyes and remains, as it were, hidden in the sanctuary of God, until He is revealed on the last day by the last advent: hence "our life is said to be hidden with Christ in God," Col. 3:3.

**XXI.** Whatever the similitude of the manna to Christ may be, it is certain, however, that the truth and the body are far more perfect than the figure itself, and that the great distinction between the two intervenes even in these three cases:

(1) For if we look at the *origin*, the manna indeed came down from heaven, but only from the lowest and most ethereal part. But Christ descended from the empyrean and supreme heaven, not by a real descent through a change of place, but by a domestic economic and philosophical moral descent, through the assumption of our flesh. Whence Christ, John 6:32, "Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father gave you the true bread from heaven," not only from the clouds, but from the bosom of the Father. The Israelites obtained manna from God, through the ministry of angels, and through the prayers of Moses. But Christ is given to us directly and exclusively by God, John 6:32, whence κατ' ἐξοχὴν [par excellence] is called the bread of God.

(2) As regards *nature*, manna was material food and corporeal as to its substance, although it was spiritual as to its meaning, originally intended for the support of earthly and corporeal life. But Christ is the food, not of the body, but of the soul, by which we are nourished in the hope of eternal life, not pressing with the mouth, but believing with the heart; not only living bread, but also life-giving, who not only nourishes the living, but also quickens the dead, who not only nourishes the healthy, but heals the sick, not for a time, but forever. He who is not only converted into our substance, but who converts and changes us into His own, is not only God's bread, but also God Himself.

(3) As to the *effect* of manna, it sustained bodily life, but only for a time, and did not preserve it from death. However, this food does not so much sustain life, but restores what has been lost, and preserves what has been given for eternity, not corporeal and earthly, but divine and immortal, which Christ notes, John 6:49-51, "Your fathers did eat

manna in the wilderness and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die.”

**XXII.** Hence, it is easy to conclude that it was not without reason that manna was said by the Apostle to be spiritual food because of the mystery of its meaning. But whether, just as Christ was symbolized in the manna, He was also a figure of the Eucharist, is a question of controversy between us and the Pontiffs. And indeed they continue this, establishing there is a difference between the manna, which was the figure of Christ's body, and the Eucharistic bread, which signifies and represents the body of Christ. But, according to them, the Eucharist is the very body of Christ, into which the substance of the bread has been converted, as Bellarmine, book 1, *On the Eucharist*, chap. 3, notes. But we do not deny the figures were indeed similar to each other, and that they signified and represented the same thing, and that until now they have been related by the Apostle, not as figures equal to that which they figure, but as sacraments similar and analogous to one another. But we deny that manna can be said to be the figure of the Eucharist, which was instituted by God to signify it, because as we have already advised in the preceding discussion, it is absurd to give the figure of a figure, since it should bear the image of an internal and spiritual thing, but not of an external and material thing which is understood by the visual senses. For what the adversaries want: that the Eucharist is the very body of Christ into which the substance of the bread has been converted, πρῶτόν est ψευδος, is first and foremost a falsehood, which they have neither been able to prove until now, nor will they ever prove.

**XXIII.** In vain Bellarmine proposes in his book that unless this difference is established between the manna and the Eucharist, i.e., that the manna was only a figure, but the Eucharist, the real thing, we shall have no more truth signified than the Jews themselves had, nay, far less, because the manna represented the body of Christ far more clearly than the dry bread [of the Eucharist], and was much more excellent in that it rained from heaven and was made by the hands of angels, but our bread comes out of the oven and is made by the hands of men. I answer: But this is said gratuitously because the sacraments are not to be looked upon materially, as to their substance, but formally as to their institution, from which their importance or the evidence of their meaning depends. But since the word of institution in the Eucharist is far more clear than the institution of manna, it is clear that the Eucharist was more excellent as to the manner of receiving it, although as to the matter signified, the truth was the same in both cases, that is, Christ with all His benefits. Therefore, the performance of the Sacraments of the New Testament over the Old, are not to be understood so that they contain the thing in themselves, but that these only signified, for both are signs signifying the sealing of the grace of Christ. But in terms of the mode of signification, the Eucharist more effectively represents the thing it signifies, not just as something to come, but already made and fulfilled, as well as longer in its duration, because it must remain until the end of the age, and more widely in its scope, because it belongs to all people indiscriminately.

**XXIV.** Having discussed these things in this way, it remains to be seen in what sense the apostle says the Israelites all ate the same spiritual food, namely, whether he is talking about the Israelites among themselves, or about them with us. The Pontiffs will indeed patronize

the figment of transubstantiation by referring this to the Israelites, as does Socinus, so that the Israelites may be said to have eaten the same spiritual food among themselves, because they all ate it indiscriminately, both the good and bad, which opinion the Lutherans also approach to confirm their doctrine of Consubstantiation. But both opinions deviate from the aim of the Apostle, which is not only to assert the identity of these sacraments among the Israelites, but especially with *Christians*, to show that the usurpation of our sacraments is not profitable to us when it is also our duty to pursue faith and holiness; for the Israelites had similar sacraments in the desert, though it did not prevent them from paying the penalty of punishments to God for their rebellion and idolatry. Those who have equally received benefits from God, if they sin alike, they will be equally punished. But the Fathers received equal signs of grace from God with us; Therefore, we who sin alike shall be punished alike; which force of Paul's argument would be entirely lost, if it were not understood that the spiritual food and drink are the same with us, and not just with each of the Israelites. Then why would the Apostle have specifically mentioned the favor of baptism accorded the Fathers, if he did not want to make them equal to us in regard to the Sacraments? But what the Apostle adds towards the end of the verse removes all difficulty, when he adds, "The fathers drank from the spiritual Rock which followed them, and that Rock was Christ." For how can that Rock be called Christ, if they have not had the same drink with us, who also partake of Christ? Augustine sees this in the passage quoted in treatise 26 on John, followed by Bertram's book, *On the Body and Blood of Christ*, "Perhaps you are asking how is the spiritual meal and drink of the Fathers the same as Paul's? Of course, it is the same as what

Believers eat and drink today, for it may not be understood as different, since it is one and the same Christ who fed the people baptized in the desert, in the cloud, and in the sea with His Flesh, who then drank His Blood, as He does in the Church of the true Believers where He feeds the people with the bread of His Body, who also drink the waves of His Blood.”

**XXV.** Nor does it help the opinion that Paul should have added the few words ‘with us’, if that had been his mind, because it is sufficiently gathered from the ἀλληλούχια [sequence] of the speech, as has already been said, or we cannot be said to have eaten the manna. Although we do not eat it physically and materially, we can still be said to eat it morally and sacramentally whenever we partake of Holy Communion because the Eucharist and the Manna are both sacramentally Christ; Or the fact that unbelievers cannot be said to have eaten spiritual food with us, because they are not partakers of Christ [by faith]. And, as has already been said above, by eating manna, food which was spiritual by the ordination of God, and which represented Christ, was said to be good to eat; Or the fact that they are said to have been of our types. For by the very fact that they [the Israelites’ baptism and food] were our types, they ought to be compared with us, for types and antitypes are comparable, if not, then ἐχ των προς τι [what are they for?]

**XXVI.** From here naturally flow the three most important Corollaries. First, the spiritual eating of Christ, against the fiction of the oral and carnal eating of Christ. For since the same Christ is proposed to be grasped by all believers, both in the Old and New Testaments, the manner of κοινωνίας [communion] and eating must be the same in both. But it is clear that oral eating could have had no place under the

Old Testament, but only spiritual through faith, since Christ had not yet been incarnated, in which sense they are said to have eaten spiritual food and drunk from the spiritual Rock which followed them.

Therefore, there is nothing else that we need now because He alone is salutary and necessary. For if the Fathers, by eating Christ spiritually through faith, became partakers of salvation, why should we not be content with that, and reject the [Roman Catholic] Mass, which is contrary both to Scripture, to reason, and to the analogy of faith, as well as to the dignity of Christ Himself, urging us to reject it by innumerable absurdities?

**XXVII.** Another point about the identity of the covenant of grace in both the Old and the New Testament: For since the sacraments are the seals of the covenant, once identified, no one can deny that the identity of the covenant is well inferred. Paul testifies very clearly that the sacraments were already the same for the Fathers as with us, if not in signs, at least in regard to the mystery of signification, "in different signs is the same faith," says Augustine, treatise 26 on John, "in different signs, but in the thing signified, though different in visible form, equal in spiritual power," tract. 26. There was a difference in the signs which they had, and in the manner of signifying, in so far as they signify that Christ was to come, whereas ours signifies Christ presented; The former more obscurely, the latter more clearly and effectively, confirms our faith, and seals our salvation. In the meantime, both looked at the same thing signified, namely, Christ, who was the same yesterday, today, and forever, Hebrews 13:8. And we receive Christ today in the supper by faith under the symbol of bread and wine, and we become partakers of His body and blood, 1 Cor. 10:16. In this way the faithful once fed on the manna of Christ for salvation, and with the

sacrament itself visible, they perceived the reality and power of the sacrament, that is, they were fed on the righteousness and merit of Christ.

**XXVIII.** Thirdly, Concerning the Knowledge of Christ under the Old Testament: For if the Fathers were called to the communion of Christ, it is necessary that they should first be imbued with His knowledge and faith, since there is no desire for the unknown, nor can we enjoy it. And this is still more definitely gathered from the fact that the very chewing of Christ proposed here must be done entirely by faith, and which necessarily requires a practical knowledge of Christ and an intimate apprehension of Him. Hence, it is evident how far they depart from the truth, and how perniciously they err, who maintain that under the Old Testament there was no divine knowledge of the person of Christ, nor the γνωρίσματα [attributes] which implanted the knowledge of Christ to die for sins, so that although the Ancients were not saved without Christ, yet they could have obtained salvation without having knowledge of Him. Nor would it be difficult, if we were to do it now, to confound this wicked error with various arguments. For if Christ was unknown to the Fathers, how is it said that Abraham managed to see His day, and that he saw Him and was burdened [*gavisus*], John 8:56? Or Moses is said to have preferred the reproach of Christ to the Egyptian riches, Heb. 11:26? Or "Fathers who died in the faith," are mentioned by the Apostle, Heb. 11, which can have no other foundation than Christ as Savior? Or can the Israelites be said to have eaten and drunk Christ in the wilderness, while they ate and drank the spiritual food and drink that signified it?



**XXIX.** Again, if Christ was unknown under the Old Testament, it is either because nothing about Him was revealed to the Fathers, or because they in no way understood the revelation made to them. It former cannot be said since in the Old Testament there are endless testimonies about the Person of Christ θεανθρωπου [of God], about His natures, offices, and benefits, about His double status, humiliation and exaltation, passion and glory. Otherwise, neither Christ nor the Apostles could have proved the evangelical mysteries from Moses and the Prophets, which we have read throughout: Luke 24:26-27, 44; John 5:39, 46; Acts 18:28 and 26:22-23; 1 Peter 1:11; Hebrews 10:5-7, and elsewhere in the New Testament. All scriptural authority is lost if the things brought forth prophesying Christ from the Old Testament to prove the divinity of the Messiah, and His satisfaction [are not relevant], and in vain Christ sent the Jews to read and search the Scriptures. For what was the need for such mysteries to be revealed to them, if the mysteries did not belong to them? What was the need of the holy men of God to diligently inquire into the time of things to come which in no way belonged to them? Was it not [the duty] of each pious person in the Old Testament to inquire into the method of obtaining salvation and avoiding eternal punishment? Nor should it be taught from 1 Peter 1:12 that the Prophets ministered to themselves, because it was "not for themselves but for us." For it is noted that Peter did not speak of the knowledge of revealed things, as if the Prophets did not watch for them, but of their completion and execution, at which point in time the Prophetic Spirit of Christ who was in them would declare that Christ's sufferings and glory would follow. Therefore, they did not inquire into the matter itself with doubt and uncertainty the fact that man's salvation would come about through Christ's sufferings

and glory, but only concerning the time when Christ was about to suffer and be glorified. But this is far from denying them any knowledge of these revealed things, for Peter necessarily supposes it, at least as to substance, though not as to degree and circumstances, which are clearly revealed to us. Indeed, their exhibition was reserved for centuries far apart: nevertheless, the fruits that would follow from it belonged equally to them, as to us.

**XXX.** This, however, is further invincibly gathered from him. But if Christ was not known to the Fathers, neither justification nor salvation could be withheld from them, because they cannot have both without knowledge of Christ, "He will justify many," says Isa. 53:11, "by his knowledge," and Christ asserts in these words which are plain to see, John 17:3, "And this is eternal life, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." And no one of sound mind has admitted the crude assertion of those who wish that the faithful could have been saved by Christ, even if he had not been known. As if salvation could be obtained without faith, or faith could be given without knowledge of the object, and so it would be better to end up ignorant than with gaining knowledge, which is the figment of the Pontiffs. Nor should we resort to the example of children, to whom the merit and fruit of Christ's death is applied to their eternal salvation, without any personal act of either knowledge or faith of their own. Because no one cannot but see there is a boundless wide gap between children who, because of their age, cannot perform the act of faith, and adults, from whom actual faith is required to obtain salvation. Therefore, "Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever," Heb. 13:8, so the Saviour, nor does He save today in any other way than yesterday. Hence, so today under the New Testament no adult is saved

without gaining all knowledge and faith in Christ. Thus, yesterday under the Old Testament some faith and knowledge of Christ was always necessary for salvation, even more obscure and narrower in degree than the faith of the New Testament, according to the measure of revelation and the nature of that dispensation, but which would be the same as ours in substance, and which would be sufficient to obtain justification and salvation for the Fathers.

**XXXI.** It is wrongly objected here, that the Old Testament dispensation had been covered with a thousand types and veils. Hence, it is not surprising that the Fathers could not penetrate the mysteries of the New Testament. Yet whatever the darkness of that dispensation, it did not cease to flash the ray of Evangelical truth under those veils and types, and with the eyes of faith the pious could enter into their solace. Otherwise, God would have amused His people with empty shadows, of which Christ was not the body, and He would not have taught that there was a mystical meaning of spiritual and heavenly things in those types. On the other hand, it is certain that God [has not signified] in only one place, that the circumcision of the heart is signified by the circumcision of the flesh, and that circumcision of the flesh without the heart would be useless. And in the sacrifices we must look not so much to what they were, as to what they signified, without which they would not only be thankless, but also objects of hate. And of course, since the types and signs are related in their formal form, and are involved in some respect for the thing signified, they should have been used not only to conceal, but also to reveal in their own way. Nor were they carnal and material things that were set forth, but the pious ascended αἰσθητά [perceptibly] and sensibly through these to τα νοητά the intelligible and spiritual. In any case, it could not have been done

[carnally] without making a very big mistake. if it were about sacrifices, since they could not believe without a sacrifice that God's justice could be appeased by the blood of beasts, they should have raised their eyes higher and looked to some other sacrifice far superior, by which all sins could be expiated, namely to Christ, who was about to lay down his life as a sacrifice for guilt, Isa, 53:10, Psalm 40:6-7, and by cutting off, by which vision and prophecy were to be sealed, sin to be atoned for, and the righteousness of the ages to be brought about, Dan. 9:24-25. Thus, the pious who used this spiritual food and drink, which was supplied by God in the wilderness, could not have fed on Christ more spiritually than that which the Apostle testifies about them, unless they had looked further to the mystery foreshadowed in this symbol. Whence it is invincibly concluded that Christ was long ago foreshadowed and promised in oracles and types, known by the faithful, and received by faith.

The End

MANNA (last paragraph)

It is wrongly objected here, that the old economy was covered with a thousand types and veils. Hence, it would not be surprising if the Fathers could not penetrate the mysteries of the New Testament. For whatever was the darkness of that dispensation, they did not cease to shine the truth of the Gospel under those veils and types, and with the eyes of faith the pious could enter into their consolation, otherwise God would have played with his people using empty shadows, whose body of Christ they were not, and would have in no place taught them there is a mystical meaning in spiritual and heavenly things. On the other hand, it is certain that God is not to be witnessed in only one place, and circumcision of the flesh would be useless without it. And in the sacrifices we must look not so much to what they were, as to what they signified, without which they would not only be unwelcome, but also exasperating. And of course, since the types and signs are related in their formal form, and involve, in some respect, the thing signified, it should have been used not only to conceal, but also to reveal in its own way. Nor were the things proposed so carnal and material, that the

pious were unable to ascend through that which was αίσθητα [perceptible] and sensible to τα νοητα the intelligible and spiritual. In any case, it would not have been possible for them to have erred greatly if it were a question of sacrifices, since they could not believe that God's justice could be appeased with the blood of beasts, and therefore, they should have risen more profoundly and looked to some other sacrifice far superior, by which all sins were expiated, to Christ that is, He who was to lay down His life as a sacrifice for guilt, Isa. 53:10, Psalm 40:6-7, and by whose excision the vision and prophecy were to be sealed, atoning for sin, and bringing forth the righteousness of the ages, Dan. 9:24-25. Thus, the pious who used this spiritual food and drink, which was supplied by God in the desert, could not have spiritually fed on Christ, as the Apostles testify about them, unless they had looked further to the mystery foreshadowed by this symbol. Whence it is invincibly concluded that Christ was long ago foreshadowed and promised in prophecy and types, was known by the faithful, and was received by faith.

THE END