



# THE EXHORTER

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***“And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.” Acts 2:40***

The Palmer Road church of Christ, Westland, Mi. ([prchurchofchrist.org](http://prchurchofchrist.org))

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**Joshua 5:12** *“The manna ceased on the day after they had eaten some of the produce of the land, so that the sons of Israel no longer had manna, but they ate some of the yield of the land of Canaan during that year.”*

Joshua records a huge change in the lives of Israel. They had entered the promise land. It was called the land of milk and honey. They ate some of the produce from the land, grain and other things. The land was rich and plentiful. They no longer needed manna. God stopped sending it.

Israel had been eating manna since the days of the wilderness and the time of Moses. A whole generation had grown up eating manna. It was always there. God never ran out. Every day for years and years. Now, Moses was dead. The nation finally got into the promise land. And now, the manna ceased.

There are some simple lessons for us here:

First, God does stop things. We read of how God operated in one place in our Bibles and some assume that God continues and always operates that way forever. He stopped sending manna. There was a time when God sent out the prophets early every morning. That stopped. There was a time when God used miracles to verify and confirm His messengers. That stopped. There was a time when God talked directly to people. That stopped. There was a time when some were baptized in the Holy Spirit. That stopped. There was a time when God approved worship was on the Sabbath day and in the Temple. That stopped. Some folks do not think God ever stops things. He does. Each of the things listed served a purpose. When that purpose was fulfilled, those things stopped. A time is coming when God will end death. It will have fulfilled it's purpose. A time is coming when this earth will cease. It will have fulfilled it's purpose. God stops things. Those that do not see that, often stumble spiritually. The manna ceased.

Second, because the manna stopped, God didn't stop providing for Israel. The food switched from manna from Heaven to produce from the ground. Who sent the rains and the sun and made the produce grow? God. He was still there. He still provided for Israel. God would never abandon them. God still cares and provides for His people today.

(OVER)

Jesus taught the disciples to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread." Our daily bread came from God. It isn't found on the ground outside our homes. It's provided through the means of our jobs, incomes and being able to buy bread. Through all of that, God's fingers are helping and providing.

Third, change is hard for us. This generation of Israel had to deal with three major changes. First, a change in leadership. Moses died and Joshua took over. Joshua wasn't Moses. Second, they changed location. From the wilderness area they crossed the Jordan River and entered the land promised to their forefathers. They knew of that promise but none of them actually got to see it realized. Now, this people would. Now they were actually in that land. Third, they witnessed the change of menus. Manna was out and gathering produce was in. Changes.

Some fight changes. Some don't do well with changes. That little child grows and eventually he's off to school. That's a change. Then he's in high school. Then he's driving. Then he's off to college. Then he's moved to his job. Then he's getting married. That can be hard on ole' mom and dad. The empty nest syndrome can be lonely and quiet. Retirement brings a change. No more getting up at the crack of dawn and fighting traffic. Often, older age presents changes. Sometimes assisted living is necessary. It's hard giving up the car keys. It's hard moving out of the place you have lived for so long. Then comes the passing of a spouse. You made promises when you were young until death do you part and when you said those words, the death and the parting do not mean much. But now, here it is. Change. Life is always changing. Israel had to adjust. So do we. Israel learned that even in the changes, God was there. We must learn the same. Manna stopped, but God was still good. He always was.

Fourth, the old ways need to be told to a new generation. God has done that with the Bible. We read and learn about Israel under the Moses days. We learn about the manna days. We learn about the time in the promise land. As Israel crossed the Jordan River, it parted, just like the Red Sea, years before. Joshua had leaders of each tribe pick up stones from the river bottom. Those stones served as reminders and visual aids to a new generation of what God had done for them. The lessons from the past were reinforced to the kids. We ought to do the same. For many of us, our grandparents or great grandparents sacrificed immensely to provide a way to worship God the Bible way. Some traveled a long way to accomplish that. Others, left faiths that they once believed to be true, to follow what was actually true. Some donated land so church buildings could be built. Many started small, meeting in living rooms and eventually schools and then they built church buildings. They worked and worked and grew and grew. A younger generation sees a large congregation meeting in a nice building and they don't realize the journey and sacrifices it took to get there. Those lessons need to be told. That history needs to be shared. The blessings of God are seen through those pages of history. God didn't want His people to forget where they came from and how they started.

Through all of this, God's goodness and God's hope for Israel never changed. It doesn't for us, either. Life moves us around and puts different people in our lives, but God's goodness and God's hope for us always remains the same.

The manna ceased. That had to be an adjustment for Israel. Some of them made it. Some didn't. Those who journeyed by faith did well. Those who had little or no faith, got in trouble. The same happens today. Some things never change.

Roger Shouse

