

Exodus 16:1-18
Daily Bread
WRCoB 10.24.21

A man joined a monastery to become a monk.

He took a vow of silence.

But every two years

He had the opportunity

To share two words with his superior.

At the end of the second year

His superior called him in and asked

"Do you have anything you want to say?"

The monk replied, "Food's cold!"

Following another 2 years of silence

The monk again had the chance to voice his thoughts.

The superior asked him what he had to say

To which he replied, "Bed's hard."

He was sent back to his room.

After another two years

The superior invited the monk in once again.

When asked if he had anything to say

The monk responded, "I quit."

At that his superior replied

"Well, that doesn't surprise me.

You've done nothing but complain ever since you got here."

Today's sermon is a three-point sermon.

1

1. People grumble when they don't trust God
2. God provides
3. We are to seek God's provisions daily.

The first point: people grumble when they don't trust God.

Ok, so what else is new?

It took just a scant six weeks

Before the Israelites were pining for Egypt.

2

³If only we had died by the Lord's hand in Egypt!

3

[At least there] we sat around big pots of meat and ate all the bread we wanted.

4

But you have brought us out into this desert to starve us to death!

~~

When the Israelites were enslaved

They **groaned** under persecution

And **cried** out to be rescued.

But here, they **grumble**.

Seven times, our passage refers to their **grumbling**.

In just six weeks, mind you!!

After 400 hundred years in captivity!

Our reaction might be something like this.

“Why how ungrateful they are!

“After all that God has done for them?”

But first, let’s take a few things into consideration.

They prepared for their departure.

But you can carry only so much

When you’re walking or riding a donkey.

Along with their earthly possessions,

They needed to carry food and water.

Since none of them had ever been to the Promised Land

They had no idea how long their journey would be!

~~

Secondly, how many people are we talking about here?

Any guesses?

In the first chapter of the Book of Numbers,

A census was taken a couple of years into their journey.

It counted 603,550 men not including women and children.

We’re talking over a million people!

Imagine the logistics of moving that many people?

Thirdly, they had just left the oasis called Elim
With its twelve springs and seventy palm trees

And now they're entering this foreboding place
Called the Desert of Sin!

I mean, who wants to travel through a place like that?

And of course, right smack dab
In the middle of this awful place
Guess what? They run out of food!

And they grumble. And we would grumble too!

They grumble about the leadership, Moses and Aaron.

It was them that led them into this God-forsaken place.

But Moses and Aaron reminded the people
That they were, in actuality, grumbling
Not against them, but against God.

They grumbled because they couldn't trust
That it was God who led them.

~~

In his book *Exodus and Revolution*
Michael Walzer shares three lessons.

The first lesson is that at times where you live
Might to feel a lot like Egypt.

The second lesson is that we yearn for
A place that flows with milk and honey.

And the third lesson is the only way to get there
Is through the wilderness.

Had the Israelites maintained their trust in God
They still might have groaned.

They still might have cried out for rescue
But they would not have grumbled.

Grumbling is a lack of trust in the sovereignty of God.

~~

But praise be to God!

God heard their grumbling and said to Moses
5 ⁴ **I will rain down bread from heaven.**

Our second point: God provides.

The LORD said to Moses,

6
⁴ In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions.

And so, God through Moses instructed the people.

That they would know it was the LORD
That brought them out of Egypt
And leads them to the promised land.

The LORD's instruction was simple.

7

12 At twilight you will eat meat and in the morning you will be filled with bread.

Wow! simple enough.

When do we get started?

That evening quail flew in and covered the camp
And the Israelites ate to their fill.

And in the morning

They awoke and discovered

Frosted flakes covering the ground.

They gathered and ate that to their fill.

~~

Holy Manna!

Arabs of the Sinai Peninsula sell resin

From the **tamarisk tree**

Calling it "man es-simma"

Roughly meaning "heavenly **manna**".

Many think this sticky sweet substance

Was what the Israelites found on the ground.

The Israelites called it "man-hu,"

Not because that was its name.

But because that's what they said when they saw it.

"Man-hu" means "What is it?"

How many children today say the same thing at dinner?

Despite the Israelites grumbling

Despite their lack of trust in God

God heard them and responded graciously.

God provided for their needs

In the evening with quail

In the morning with Holy Manna.

~~

God provides!

We too often take for granted refrigerators and pantries

Filled to the brim with every kind of food.

And we hear, “there’s nothing to eat in this house!”

We forget that it is not us

Who controls the seasons, the rain, the sun and soil.

It is God whose provisions supply us with what we need.

~~

The interesting thing about all this is what comes next.

Moses tells them this Holy Manna is the bread

The LORD has given them to eat.

They were to gather as much as they need

No more, no less.

When they gather

Those who gather much didn’t have too much

Those who gathered little had just enough.

Everyone had as much as they needed.

No one went without.

If only that could be true in our world today!

Here's another thig.

Every day, they were to gather manna

Except for the sixth day

When they were to gather enough for 2 days

To include the Sabbath.

Other than that, they could not hoard it.

For if they tried to save some for the following day

The manna would be filled with maggots.

~~

Each morning they had to depend on God

To provide for that given day.

Point three: We are to seek God's provisions daily.

In the Lord's Prayer, Jesus instructs us how to pray.

8 "Give us **THIS** day, our daily bread."

The prayer doesn't say,

Give us this day our provisions for the week.

Looking to God to provide is not a once-in-awhile endeavor.

We are to seek God's provision daily.

Why?

The Book of Proverbs explains it this way.

9

Proverbs 30:7-9 NIV

7 “Two things I ask of you, Lord;

do not refuse me before I die:

8 Keep falsehood and lies far from me;

give me neither poverty nor riches,

but give me only my daily bread.

**9 Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you
and say, ‘Who is the Lord?’**

Or I may become poor and steal,

and so dishonor the name of my God.

That's why we find it important to pray before a meal.

~~

The provisions God provides daily is not just physical food.

It is also spiritual food.

As Jesus said in his own wilderness experience

10

Matthew 4:4 NLT “No! The Scriptures say,

**‘People do not live by bread alone, but by every word
that comes from the mouth of God.’”**

Spiritual food is as necessary as physical food.

We are to look to God daily for both.

In other words, all bread, whether physical or spiritual
Is Holy Manna, bread from heaven
Seek it daily.

~~

Our three points, then.

Grumbling comes by not trusting God.

Remember, the road to the Promised Land
First goes through the wilderness.

Trust that God guiding hand is with you even then.

~~

Secondly, God provides!

It may not be T-bone or lobster every meal.

It may be the same comment coming from our mouths
When food is put on our table

That came from the mouths of the Israelites
When they saw the manna from heaven
What in Heaven's name is it?

God provides us with all that we need
Both physically and spiritually.

11

1 Timothy 6:7-8 NLT

⁷ After all, we brought nothing with us when we came into the world, and we can't take anything with us when we leave it. ⁸ So if we have enough food and clothing, let us be content.

The third point is that God provides daily provision
So that we may seek him thanks daily.

We are to take moments out of each and every day
To give expressions of praise and thanksgiving to God.

12

*For health and strength and daily food
We give Thee thanks, O LORD.*

~~

And so today, we give thanks to God for daily bread
The physical kind
And the spiritual kind

Jesus said

13

John 6:48-51 NIV

⁴⁸ I am the bread of life. ⁴⁹ Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, yet they died. ⁵⁰ But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which anyone may eat and not die.

14

⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”

Jesus is the bread of life

And in communion we find both
Spiritual and physical nourishment.

Praise be to God!