

August 5, 2018
Sermon for the Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost
St Peter Lutheran Church
Bowie, TX
Larry Knobloch, Pastor
Exodus 16:2–15

J.J.- Jesu Juva—Help me, Jesus

Exodus 16:2–16 (ESV)

² And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, ³ and the people of Israel said to them, “Would that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.” ⁴ Then the LORD said to Moses, “Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day’s portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not. ⁵ On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily.” ⁶ So Moses and Aaron said to all the people of Israel, “At evening you shall know that it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, ⁷ and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your grumbling against the LORD. For what are we, that you grumble against us?” ⁸ And Moses said, “When the LORD gives you in the evening meat to eat and in the morning bread to the full, because the LORD has heard your grumbling that you grumble against him—what are we? Your grumbling is not against us but against the LORD.” ⁹ Then Moses said to Aaron, “Say to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, ‘Come near before the LORD, for he has heard your grumbling.’ ” ¹⁰ And as soon as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, they looked toward the wilderness, and behold, the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. ¹¹ And the LORD said to Moses, ¹² “I have heard the grumbling of the people of Israel. Say to them, ‘At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall be filled with bread. Then you shall know that I am the LORD your God.’ ” ¹³ In the evening quail came up and covered the camp, and in the morning dew lay around the camp. ¹⁴ And when the dew had gone up, there was on the face of the wilderness a fine, flake-like thing, fine as frost on the ground. ¹⁵ When the people of Israel saw it, they said to one another, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, “It is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat. ¹⁶ This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘Gather of it, each one of you, as much as he can eat. You shall each take an omer, according to the number of the persons that each of you has in his tent.’ ”

Have you seen the commercial? The one where the reporter asks a guy who's just won the World Series or the NBA finals or the Super Bowl, "What are you going to do next?" The answer: "I'm going to Disney World!" This television commercial first aired on Jan 25, 1987, following Super Bowl XXI: "Phil Simms of the New York Giants, you just won the Super Bowl. What are you going to do next?" "I'm going to Disney World," he says. And they do! They really do go to Disney World. Phil Simms got a nice bonus check of \$75k to spend while he was there, but with only a couple of exceptions, that phrase has been uttered every year since 1987.

So, in that same tradition, lets hearken back to the Exodus, circa 1446 BC.

People of Israel, you've just escaped from slavery in Egypt; what are you going to do next?!?

You've been enslaved in Egypt for 430 years to the day (Ex 12:41). You've been sent Moses who cried to the Lord, "*Let my people go!*" You've been told no by Pharaoh over and over.

So, people of Israel, what are you going to do next?

You've seen the plagues—the blood flowing, the flies bothering, the hail destroying, the frogs inhabiting, the animals dying, the locusts devouring, the gnats pestering, the boils hurting, the darkness blinding.

So, people of Israel, what are you going to do next? You've roasted your year-old, unblemished lamb. You've painted the doorframe with blood. You've heard the wailing throughout the night as the firstborn died.

So, people of Israel, what are you going to do next?

You've left Egypt with the spoils, with their gold and silver and clothing (12:35). You, even with the Lord's favor, have plundered the Egyptians (12:36). You've followed the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night.

So, people of Israel, what are you going to do next?

You've walked on the dry ground with the wall of water to the right and to the left. You've seen the Egyptians who pursued swept into the sea. You've even cried out,

"I will sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father's God, and I will exalt him" (15:1b-2).

So, people of Israel, what are you going to do next?

The answer is clear: grumble! *"Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger"* (v 3).

Grumble, grumble, grumble. And the Israelites said, *"Is it because there are no graves in Egypt that you have taken us away to die in the wilderness? What have you done to us in bringing us out of Egypt? Is not this what we said to you in Egypt: 'Leave us alone that we may serve the Egyptians'? For it would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness"* (14:11-12).

Grumble, grumble, grumble. Those stiff-necked people, the Lord heard their grumbling!

Of course, *you* don't grumble. No, never you. None of us would do that!

But you do. You grumble! You grumble . . . when the price of gas is too high, or in Montague County, when the price of oil is too low . . . when loan interest rates are too high and when bank interest rates are too low . . . when the cost of milk is too high and when the dairy farmers' profits are too low . . . when the calories in food are too high and the calories we burn in exercise are too low.

We grumble, grumble, grumble . . . when we're bored because we have too much time . . . then we're worried because we have too little time.

We're worse than Goldilocks. Our porridge is too hot! It's too cold! The beds are too hard and too soft!

Even so, despite our grumbling, the Lord says, "*Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you*" (v 4). "*He commanded the skies above*" (Ps 78:23).

God causes it to rain and snow, the wind to blow and the stars to twinkle. God commands the skies above. God brought manna. "*And when the dew had gone up, there was on the face of the wilderness a fine, flake-like thing, fine as frost on the ground. When the people of Israel saw it, they said to one another, 'What is it?' For they did not know what it was. And Moses said to them, 'It is the bread that the Lord has given you to eat'*" (vv 14–15). Was ist dast?

God commands the skies above.

God brought quail. *“At twilight you shall eat meat. . . . In the evening quail came up and covered the camp”* (vv 12–13).

God continues to command the skies above. About 1500 years later God brought angels who filled the skies, who sang praises and proclaimed, *“Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger”* (Lk 2:10–12).

God commands the skies above about 32 years after that. And there on Calvary’s hill, *“It was now about the sixth hour, and there was darkness over the whole land until the ninth hour, while the sun’s light failed. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two. Then Jesus, calling out with a loud voice, said, ‘Father, into your hands I commit my spirit!’ And having said this he breathed his last. Now when the centurion saw what had taken place, he praised God, saying, ‘Certainly this man was innocent!’”* (Lk 23:44–47).

And He was, except He took your sins and He took mine. *“Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!”* (Jn 1:29). *“[God] made him to be sin who knew so sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God”* (2 Cor 5:21). The Son of God breathed His last while the skies were dark.

God commands the skies above. As the darkness lifted from the skies, the morning of the third day, the women went to the tomb and found it empty. *“Why are you looking here? Jesus is among the living!”* (cf. Lk 24:1, 5).

God commands the skies above. The skies were bright and filled with clouds.

“ ‘You will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.’ And when he had said these things, as they were looking on, he was lifted up, and a cloud took him out of their sight” (Acts 1:8–9).

All going back to the days of the Exodus, recorded by Moses in our Text as God commands the skies above. He says: “... ‘Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you’” (v 4).

He did; He does. Still today. He gives you your daily bread. “Daily bread includes everything that has to do with the support and needs of the body, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, land, animals, money, goods, a devout husband or wife, devout children, devout workers, devout and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, self-control, good reputation, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like” (Small Catechism, explanation of the Fourth Petition).

Even more than that, He gives us *the* Bread, the Bread of Life, the Bread “*who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world*” (Jn 6:33).

He gives us Jesus. And Jesus continues to bless us through the gift of the Holy Spirit. The very same Spirit give to Molly Grace Gilmore this morning. Simple water, combined with God’s Word, for the forgiveness of sins. So simple, so easy, yet so powerful! Little Grace is marked, she is a child of God today and forever!

And you have that same promise in the sacrament of Holy Baptism. You are God’s child forevermore! Yes, you can leave God behind but He has promised to never leave you nor

forsake you. And even if you do turn your back on God, confession and repentance is all that you need and God will welcome you back, because you are still His beloved child.

Any grumbling that you have is never God's fault. He is ready to forgive.

So see, You Have Nothing to Grumble about, for God Says, "*Behold, I Am About to Rain Bread from Heaven for You.*" Ready, willing and able.

Amen.

The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus!

Amen.

S. D. G - Soli Deo Gloria
To God alone be glory

God Rains for You
Exodus 16:2–16

1. God's children were blessed; but what did they do next.
2. We are blessed; but what do we do next?
3. In spite of our grumbling what did God do?