



03/02/2026

Key Verse: Exodus 16:4

“Then the Lord said to Moses, “I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction or not.”

The Reflection:

One month has passed since God led the Israelites out of Egypt where they had been enslaved. One month. And they are already complaining about being hungry. They also are likely full of fear and anxiety about this new life wandering through the wilderness to an unfamiliar land. It is an understandable human response. Many of us would rather remain in less than ideal circumstances than face the uncertainty a drastic change would bring.

What struck me in this reading (the story continues in the next day's reading Exodus 16: 9-21) is God's response to His complaining people. He doesn't punish. He provides. He sends them manna in the mornings and quail in the evenings. God attaches some rules to the gathering of the manna, which are intended to test the Israelites. They, of course, fail the test by hoarding more than they need for that day. God seems to be saying, “Do not fear for I will give you each day all that you need.” They haven't learned to trust Him yet. Have we?

Over one thousand years later, Jesus was still teaching the people the same concept: God will provide for us. Jesus taught us to ask the Father to “give us this day our daily bread.” (Matthew 6: 11) He wants us to trust and rely on God. Do we ask God daily for His provision? Do we trust He will give us what we need? Do we try to hoard what He does provide? About this daily bread, Annie F. Downs says, “That's what I need. I think I need more. I think I need Him to hand me days worth of provisions. I think I need weeks worth of answered questions. I think I need Him to tell me NOW how things are going to go THEN, whether that THEN is tomorrow or next Tuesday or next year. I don't. I need enough for today.” I had hoped that going through the training to become a Stephen Minister would bring me closer to God. Just last week I saw God reply to my plea by providing me with understanding and the right words to enhance our learning during our practice scenarios. I

know now that when I ask seek His help with a care receiver, He will provide it. This life, this faith walk is a journey, and I am still learning to ask, to trust, and to rely on Jesus daily.

Pondering this Exodus reading and how it fits in with Lent and the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, I thought about how God's provision doesn't just cover our daily needs but also our ultimate need—to be reconciled to God. Humanity is responsible for our estrangement from God. Yet in His goodness, God provides the way for us to return to Him. “For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.” (John 3: 16) God did the work, provided the way, and we reap the benefits. It has been this way since the beginning. Manna for today. Life for eternity.

The Prayer:

Providing God, Hear us when we ask You for our daily bread. Open our eyes to see how abundantly You give us strength, comfort, mercy, and grace. Remind us, as we walk through this season of Lent, that believing in You will provide us with our ultimate desire to be with You eternally. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Jeanine Kowalewski