

March 4, 2021

Read Exodus 16

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.'

Our Daily Bread

Sometimes I think so much about the future that I can no longer enjoy the present. I might be on vacation, and instead of relaxing and enjoying the moment I start planning out the upcoming days – where will I go, how will I get there, how long will I stay, where will I eat, and where will I go next? Some planning is necessary, but remember that line by Robert Burns:

“The best laid schemes o' mice an' men / Gang aft a-gley.” (Burns was an 18th century Scotsman)

Well God speaks to our obsession over the future in the 16th chapter of Exodus. God has led his people out of slavery and into a wilderness where they fear for their lives because of the scarcity of food and water in this harsh environment. To satisfy their thirst God brings water from a rock. To satisfy their hunger God causes bread (called manna) to fall from the sky, but he instructs his people to collect only as much as they need for a day (or two days if they're collecting it the eve of the Sabbath).

But some of the people have a hard time following God's instructions; they collect more manna than they need, “just in case.” And as a lesson to those people, God causes the excess manna they have collected to go foul, to become inedible.

I see three lessons here: the first is to trust in God. When we pray the Lord's Prayer we ask for our “daily” bread, not our weekly or monthly bread. God wants us to place our trust in his providence *daily*, to have faith that he will meet our needs.

The second lesson has to do with hoarding. God provides enough resources for all of us to thrive, but to try to hold onto more than what we need is a futile endeavor.

The third lesson, I believe, is about living in the moment. When we put our faith in God to provide our future needs, it frees us from anxiety over the future. God has not relieved us of responsibility (we still have work to do), but God wants us to clear our minds of worry over a future that we cannot predict. Rather than spend our time trying to gain security in an uncertain future, perhaps we could spend our time thanking God for the *daily* blessings we receive.

Prayer: God of all providence, in our hustle and bustle to gain a secure future we often forget the daily blessings that fall out of heaven right in front of us. Help us recognize your love and care that comes to us each and every day, and help us to trust in you for our futures. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.