

Sunday, September 20, 2020

Greeting: God is good **all the time**. All the time **God is good**.

Question of the Day:

What does the word “manna” mean?

- a) bread of heaven b) God’s bread c) flaky stuff d) What is it?

Hymn “Fill My Cup, Lord”

Call to Worship

Today we open ourselves to God’s presence.

Let the hearts of all who seek God rejoice.

When we eat, we are reminded of God’s provision.

When we drink pure water, we give thanks.

Surely God has blessed us with food and drink.

Daily we are strengthened for tasks we face.

We benefit from God’s generosity every day.

Let all the people worship with joy!

Prayer of Invocation

Holy God, let the wisdom of your Word rain down on us like manna and feed us, that we may be strengthened to do the work to which we are called, for the glory and honor of your name. Amen.

Exodus 16:1-16, 31 *The Message*

On the fifteenth day of the second month after they had left Egypt, the whole company of Israel moved on from Elim to the Wilderness of Sin which is between Elim and Sinai. The whole company of Israel complained against Moses and Aaron there in the wilderness. The Israelites said, “Why didn’t GOD let us die in comfort in Egypt where we had lamb stew and all the bread we could eat? You’ve brought us out into this wilderness to starve us to death, the whole company of Israel!”

GOD said to Moses, “I’m going to rain bread down from the skies for you. The people will go out and gather each day’s ration. I’m going to test them to see if they’ll live according to my Teaching or not. On the sixth day, when they prepare what they have gathered, it will turn out to be twice as much as their daily ration.”

Moses and Aaron told the People of Israel, “This evening you will know that it is GOD who brought you out of Egypt; and in the morning you will see the Glory of GOD. Yes, he’s listened to your complaints against him. You haven’t been complaining against us, you know, but against GOD.”

Moses said, “Since it will be GOD who gives you meat for your meal in the evening and your fill of bread in the morning, it’s GOD who will have listened to your complaints against him. Who are we in all this? You haven’t been complaining to us – you’ve been complaining to GOD!”

Moses instructed Aaron: “Tell the whole company of Israel: ‘Come near to GOD. He’s heard your complaints.’”

When Aaron gave out the instructions to the whole company of Israel, they turned to face the wilderness. And there it was: the Glory of GOD visible in the Cloud.

GOD spoke to Moses, “I’ve listened to the complaints of the Israelites. Now tell them: ‘At dusk you will eat meat and at dawn you’ll eat your fill of bread, and you’ll realize that I am GOD, *your* God.’”

That evening quail flew in and covered the camp and in the morning there was a layer of dew all over the camp. When the layer of dew had lifted, there on the wilderness ground was a

fine flaky something, fine as frost on the ground. The Israelites took one look and said to one another, *man-hu* (What is it?). They had no idea what it was.

So Moses told them, “It’s the bread GOD has given you to eat. And these are GOD’s instructions: ‘Gather enough for each person, about two quarts per person; gather enough for everyone in your tent.’”

. . . The Israelites named it manna (What is it?). It looked like coriander seed, whitish. And it tasted like a cracker with honey.

Matthew 20:1-16 *The Message*

“God’s kingdom is like an estate manager who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. They agreed on a wage of a dollar a day, and went to work.

“Later, about nine o’clock, the manager saw some other men hanging around the town square unemployed. He told them to go to work in his vineyard and he would pay them a fair wage. They went.

“He did the same thing at noon, and again at three o’clock. At five o’clock he went back and found still others standing around. He said, ‘Why are you standing around all day doing nothing?’

“They said, ‘Because no one hired us.’

“He told them to go to work in his vineyard.

“When the day’s work was over, the owner of the vineyard instructed his foreman, ‘Call the workers in and pay them their wages. Start with the last hired and go on to the first.’

“Those hired at five o’clock came up and were each given a dollar. When those who were hired first saw that, they assumed they would get far more. But they got the same, each of them one dollar. Taking the dollar, they groused angrily to the manager, ‘These last workers put in only one easy hour, and you just made them equal to us, who slaved all day under a scorching sun.’

“He replied to the one speaking for the rest, ‘Friend, I haven’t been unfair. We agreed on the wage of a dollar, didn’t we? So take it and go. I decided to give to the one who came last the same as you. Can’t I do what I want with my own money? Are you going to get stingy because I am generous?’

“Here it is again, the Great Reversal: many of the first ending up last, and the last first.”

Response: *The Word of God, for the people of God! Thanks be to God!*

Time of Prayer

How Is It With Your Soul?

Call to Confession

Like the Israelites in the wilderness, we have been heard to complain. God is often blamed for calamities more than praised for the sustaining presence that works for our good. It is easier for us to be jealous of others than to rejoice in the opportunities God gives them. Surely we need to repent.

Prayer of Confession

O God, we are people of the flesh more than people of the spirit. Our lives are not worthy of the gospel of Christ. We admit our resentment when some people we deem unworthy benefit from your generosity. We confess our lack of attention to your laws, your living Word, your prompting Spirit. You alone are our salvation, our healing, our high opportunity to serve. We choose to belong to you. Accept and change us, we pray.

(Time of silent prayer.)

Assurance

God has offered us a presence we have not recognized, bread we have ignored, and compassion we have not deserved. The food from heaven is offered to us daily, freely given to all who are open to receive it. Let us rejoice in this moment of God’s amazing generosity, opening our lives

to the gifts of God, that we might share them with others. Let us praise God by joining with Jesus in prayer:

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Answer to the Question of the Day

Time of Offering *Thank you to everyone for your faithful generosity.*

Offering Prayer

Lord, giver of all good gifts, thank you for the resources gathered here. Use these gifts for the advancement of your kingdom; in Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Message "The Rain Falls the Same on Everyone" Rev. Joyce Rich

Commission and Blessing

Rest in the knowledge that God always provides.

**We give and love with generous hearts, for this
honors God who is most generous and loving.**

Beloved, may God continue to bless and keep you. Amen. **And Amen.**

Hymn "Give Thanks"

Announcements

Read For Next Week: Exodus 17:1-7; Philippians 2:1-13

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