

## **Exodus 16:2-4, 9-15<sup>iv</sup> v with Psalm 78:23-29**

The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. The Israelites said to them, “If only we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.” 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. Then Moses said to Aaron, “Say to the whole congregation of the Israelites, ‘Draw near to the LORD, for he has heard your complaining.’” And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they looked toward the wilderness, and the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. The LORD spoke to Moses and said, “I have heard the complaining of the Israelites; say to them, ‘At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall have your fill of bread; then you shall know that I am the LORD your God.’” In the evening quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilderness was a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground. When the Israelites saw it, they said to one another, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, “It is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat.”

---

### **<sup>iv</sup> About the Exodus 16:2-4, 9-15**

Today’s reading recounts one of the many instances of the people’s murmuring during the time of the exodus as the Israelites demand that God live up to the divine demands of covenant partnership. As their God, Yahweh must demonstrate that he can provide and protect them as a household leader or father was required to do.

As their wilderness trip becomes more extended. The Israelites long for the meat and bread they ate in Egypt. God responds by providing for them both flesh and bread, but on God’s own terms, one day at a time. Thus God provided for them but at the same time tested their faith.

God acts, saying: “You shall know that I am the Lord your God.” This statement of recognition occurs in the priestly writings (Exodus 7:5), in Isaiah (45:3, 6) and in Ezekiel (7:27, 11:10). God’s actions disclose, to believer and unbeliever alike, the Lord of our world and life. God provides from nature’s bounty for the Israelites, reliably supplying the needs of an unreliable people.

---

**v Psalm 78:23-29<sup>v</sup>**

<sup>23</sup>So he commanded the clouds above \*  
and opened the doors of heaven.

<sup>24</sup>He rained down manna upon them to eat \*  
and gave them grain from heaven.

<sup>25</sup>So mortals ate the bread of angels; \*  
he provided for them food enough.

<sup>26</sup>He caused the east wind to blow in the heavens \*  
and led out the south wind by his might.

<sup>27</sup>He rained down flesh upon them like dust \*  
and winged birds like the sand of the sea.

<sup>28</sup>He let it fall in the midst of their camp \*  
and round about their dwellings.

<sup>29</sup>So they ate and were well filled, \*  
for he gave them what they craved.