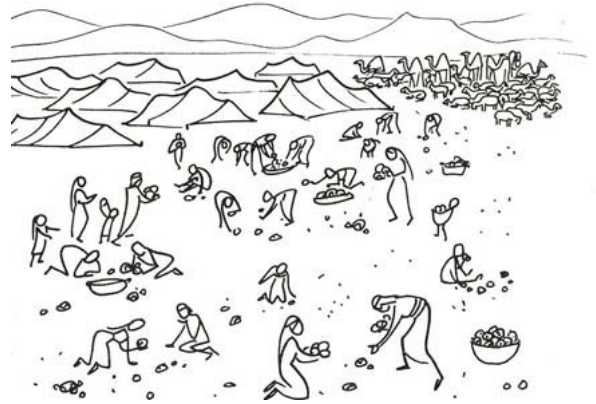


**St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Church**  
**Sermon by Pastor Anthony E. Schultz**  
**Pentecost 11. August 12, 2012**  
**Exodus 16:2-15**



<sup>2</sup>In the desert the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. <sup>3</sup>The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the LORD's hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death." <sup>4</sup>Then the LORD said to Moses, "I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions. <sup>5</sup>On the sixth day they are to prepare what they bring in, and that is to be twice as much as they gather on the other days."<sup>6</sup>So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, "In the evening you will know that it was the LORD who brought you out of Egypt, <sup>7</sup>and in the morning you will see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your grumbling against him. Who are we, that you should grumble against us?" <sup>8</sup>Moses also said, "You will know that it was the LORD when he gives you meat to eat in the evening and all the bread you want in the morning, because he has heard your grumbling against him. Who are we? You are not grumbling against us, but against the LORD." <sup>9</sup>Then Moses told Aaron, "Say to the entire Israelite community, 'Come before the LORD, for he has heard your grumbling.'" <sup>10</sup>While Aaron was speaking to the whole Israelite community, they looked toward the desert, and there was the glory of the LORD appearing in the cloud. <sup>11</sup>The LORD said to Moses, <sup>12</sup>"I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites. Tell them, 'At twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God.'" <sup>13</sup>That evening quail came and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. <sup>14</sup>When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor. <sup>15</sup>When the Israelites saw it, they said to each other, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, "It is the bread the LORD has given you to eat."

People of God – rescued from the flaming lake of fire in hell by the innocent blood of the very Lamb of God:

I was getting the oil changed in the PNKN PI – when all of a sudden someone rolled up in a car. One of the oil worker guys said, “It’s the pizza dude!” A young lady got out of the car and said, “Here’s a *free* pizza and a whole stack of coupons! I hope you guys have a great day!” And set the pizza down on the counter and away she went. One of the oil guys asked, “What kind of pizza is it?” The other guy says, “It’s self rising crust supreme!” “Oh,” the first guy says, “I was hoping it was something better!” Better?! It’s free – delivered hot and you didn’t even ask for it – and you wish it had *what?* Extra cheese – more pepperoni – mushrooms on half? The truth is – we grow up complaining! The whole Goldilocks thing – this porridge is too hot! This porridge is too cold. This bed is too hard. This bed is too soft! It is tempting to grumble and complain about just about everything! The problem with complaining is it’s a sin! God’s Word encourages us today to bear a fruit of faith – contentment, gratitude, thankfulness! God’s Word encourages us:

**Don’t Complain!**

- 1. The LORD gives us daily bread**
- 2. The Lord Jesus is the Bread of Life.**

Context? The Children of Israel have been set free from their sore bondage and captivity – making mud bricks for the mighty Pharaoh. Remember the plagues? First the plague of water to blood. How horrible and disgusting that was. Then came the frogs – everywhere – in your food, in your laundry, in your bed, in your face – frogs! Then came gnats or lice – like the dust – so thick they were everywhere. Then came the flies – buzzing, swarming, filthy flies everywhere. The 5<sup>th</sup> plague – the livestock got sick – the cattle in the field, the horses, the donkeys, the camels, the oxen and the sheep – painfully sick. The 6<sup>th</sup> plague was boils – painful, hot, sore infections – on the people and on the animals – it was horrible! The 7<sup>th</sup> plague – thunder and hail – not the rumble in the distance – that’s kind of wonderful – but the thunder that pounds and hammers – again and again – and hail – cold hard chunks of ice – falling from the sky – shredding the plants and doing untold harm. Then comes the 8<sup>th</sup> plague – locusts – grasshoppers – their little jaws working – grinding and grinding – eating the shredded plants as if they were tossed salad. The 9<sup>th</sup>

plague – darkness – thick impenetrable darkness – can't see your own hand in front of your face darkness. Do you know what that's like? You step on stuff that's sharp – you walk into stuff – so that your shins are bruised and bleeding – you crack your head – you knock over breakable stuff – you fall because you can't see the danger – the edge! It's horrible. And the worst is still to come! The death of the firstborn. I would have died – Matthew would have died – Uncle David would have died – nephew Josh – grandchildren Zachary and Jacob and Jackson Daniel! There was death everywhere. It has been said – one of the saving graces of the deaths we have to deal with – they come by the grace of God – most often one at a time. Sometimes you will hear people say – death comes in threes! A neighbor dies – a co-worker – an in-law – and you have support – a whole network of people to help and support you. Imagine in every home – everywhere you looked – there was death. I can't help you – I have my own grief and loss to deal with. There was death everywhere! In the middle of the night the not so mighty Pharaoh said, "Get out! Go away!"

The Children of Israel left – until their back against the Red Sea – here comes the army of the Pharaoh – the chariots and horsemen of Egypt – making the ground tremble all around them! The Israelites cried out in fear to the LORD. The LORD said you don't need to do anything. This army of the Pharaoh you see today – you will never see again. You know the deliverance the LORD brought about that day! Dry land – I bet there was a cloud of dust – through the middle of the Sea – as God's people escaped. And then – the Pharaoh's army gave chase. Out into the middle of the Sea they drove – and then the wheels started to come off the chariots. Turn back! Turn back! They all cried out – and alas, too late! The water came crashing down on them!

Safe now – out in the wilderness – guided by the pillar of cloud by day – the pillar of fire by night – God's people needed water. They traveled 3 days without discovering water. Slowly but surely – the water you had would begin to run out. People would ask – do you have any water? Do you have any water to share? Would you share? Or would you think – if I give some to you – then there's that much less for me to drink. Share? Me? You should have brought more for yourself! It's your problem – not mine. Then they came to a place called Marah – where there was plenty of water. The only problem was – the water was bitter – so sour you couldn't stand to drink it! Now what? It's a test! What are you going to do? Are you going

to grumble and complain? Are you going to curse and swear? Are you going to blame Moses and Aaron? Or are you going to say the LORD is still in charge. The LORD has a plan. My Heavenly Father – who always took care of his sheep before – won't fail us now! And the LORD didn't fail them! He had Moses pitch a piece of wood into the water – and by a miracle – the water was now sweet and refreshing! How wonderful was that?

Next stop – a place called Elim. It was literally an oasis – a place in the middle of the wilderness with shade and water. It was a place to rest and refresh and to fill all your water jars! Nice! **Then – the whole Israelite community set out from Elim and came to the Desert of Sin – not the Desert of missing the mark/rebelling against God – but Sin – short for Sinai – S.I.N.A.I . on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had come out of Egypt.** --how's it going? God's Word says, **<sup>2</sup>In the desert the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. <sup>3</sup>The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the LORD's hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death."** There are always mal-contents, people who are complainers. The people who complain when the weather is flawless – saying, "Well, it's about time!" "Sure it's nice – but it won't last!" And the ever popular, "We'll pay for this this winter – one nice day in August – and some January – it will be cold and horrible!" That's just wrong! God's people grumbled and complained – the whole community – everybody grumbled!

**<sup>11</sup>The LORD said to Moses, <sup>12</sup>"I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites. Tell them, 'At twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God.'"** **<sup>13</sup>That evening quail came and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. <sup>14</sup>When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor. <sup>15</sup>When the Israelites saw it, they said to each other, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, "It is the bread the LORD has given you to eat."** The LORD is merciful. He could have opened up the ground and swallowed them up. He could have rained down fire and brimstone on them. But he didn't. The people wanted meat and bread – and the LORD would give them meat and bread. That evening the quail came. By the time the sun began to set – there was the smell of grilling

out – delicious little birds on the spit – going around and around – their little drum sticks and wings – tender – the meat juicy! In the morning – like the dew or frost – like coriander seeds – little pieces of honey bread – also sweet and delicious. You could bake it – boil it – fry it – coat it – dip it – it was wonderful.

**<sup>15</sup> When the Israelites saw it, they said to each other, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, “It is the bread the LORD has given you to eat.” The LORD was patient. In wondrous mercy he gave his people meat and bread.** Manna – what is it? That’s what manna means – what is it? It’s bread from Heaven! This is not to say – complain bitterly and the LORD will give you what you want. God’s Word also very clearly teaches – don’t put your Heavenly Father to the test! Fast forward – to Numbers chapter 11. **The rabble with them began to crave other food, and again the Israelites started wailing and said, “If only we had meat to eat! We remember the fish we ate in Egypt at no cost – also the cucumbers, melons, leeks, onions and garlic. But now we have lost our appetite, we never see anything but this manna! ...Moses heard the people of every family wailing, each at the entrance to his tent. The LORD became exceedingly angry, and Moses was troubled... (The LORD says...) “Tell the people: ‘Consecrate yourselves in preparation for tomorrow, when you will eat meat. The LORD heard you when you wailed, “If only we had meat to eat! We were better off in Egypt!” Now the LORD will give you meat, and you will eat it. You will not eat it for just one day, or two days, or five, ten or twenty days, but for a whole month – until it comes out of your nostrils and you loathe it – because you have rejected the LORD, who is among you, and have wailed before him, saying, “Why did we ever leave Egypt?” This was not an empty threat! The people went out and gathered quail. No one gathered less than ten homers – a homer is about 8 bushels – as much as one donkey could carry! Each person had 80 bushels of quail? This was way more than anyone could eat! Then they spread them out all around the camp. But while the meat was still between their teeth and before it could be consumed, the anger of the LORD burned against the people, and he struck them with a severe plague... Numbers 11. Numbers chapter 21 starting with verse 4. “They traveled from Mount Hor along the route to the Red Sea, to go around Edom. But the people grew impatient on the way; they spoke against God and against Moses, and said, “Why have**

**your brought us up out of Egypt to die in the desert? There is no bread! There is no water! And we detest this miserable food!" Then the LORD Sent venomous snakes among them; they bit the people and many Israelites died. The people came to Moses and said, "We sinned when we spoke against the LORD and against you. Pray that the LORD will take the snakes away from us." So Moses prayed for the people. The LORD said to Moses, "Make a snake and put it on a pole; anyone who is bitten can look at it and live." So Moses made a bronze snake and put it up on a pole. Then when anyone was bitten by a snake and looked at the bronze snake, he lived.**

Complain! Complain! Does your lawnmower start? Have you ever pulled and pulled and pulled and pulled? Do you have gasoline with ethanol in it? Do you know how much gasoline costs – up what 41¢ in a week--\$4.00 some places around here? Something is leaking out of my car – it makes a spot about 6" across every night! Over 20 years ago – grandmas from my church used to go down to Arizona with the Brewers for Spring training. Every year they'd come home and I'd ask them, "Well, how does it look?" They'd say – "Pitching or hitting – one day we have one – the next day we have the other – it's going to be a long year!" Will we be able to watch a single Packer game this year – without hearing what Brett Favre would have done it he were our quarterback? Complain! Complain! It's very easy to complain – but it isn't right! It's sinful and wrong to grumble and complain. Jesus died on the cross for all the times we have grumbled, whined and complained. Jesus died on the cross for all the times we complained against our Heavenly Father! We will show Jesus' forgiving love in our ♥ when we do what Paul told the Thessalonians: **"Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus!"** 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 Give thanks in all circumstances and you will be a powerful reminder to everyone around you – to glorify our Redeemer. Amen!