March 23rd Sunday School Lesson
“Bread From Heaven” – Exodus 16:11-17

Exodus 16:11-17

“The LORD said to Moses, ‘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.’”

That evening quail came and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor. 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. This is what the LORD has commanded: ‘Everyone is to gather as much as they need. Take an omer for each person you have in your tent.’”

The Israelites did as they were told; some gathered much, some little.”

This week’s text is a beautiful reminder of God’s promise for provisions. We hear His promise over and over again in the Bible, yet do we truly place our trust in God that He will provide what we need on a daily and weekly basis? Or, do we sometimes find ourselves placing our trust in those things which are eventually sure to disappoint?

The passage above examines the time after which the Israelites have been delivered from the slavery of Egypt. God has used Moses to create a multitude of miracles, yet in about a month’s time, the people begin to question and complain to God. They are hungry. Oh, how quickly we forget. Have you ever caught yourself doing exactly this? We are so quick to forget how faithful God has been. He has always been there for us, and always will, but somehow in the middle of all the angst, we somehow feel alone and burdened. We tend to forget how faithful God is, and how He always provides exactly what we need, when we need it. And sometimes it even tastes as good as honey!

Sometimes provisions come in the form of a surprise. We may not see how in the world God will answer our prayers. We feel the situation is simply impossible. But rest assured, that is God’s specialty. He always provides in just the right way, often in a way that we never even knew existed, or expected, just as the people said, “What is it?” in response to the manna. This has happened so many times in my life! He continually surprises me by the way He answers prayer, and makes the impossible possible.

Look back at your life and try to trace the threads of your prayers. What were the results? When were you provided manna? Did you recognize it when it arrived? What thoughts in your mind surface now to suggest impossible resolutions? Give these to God. Tell Him that even though you can’t possibly see a way, you know that you don’t have to, because He is there leading and providing. Manna will come. Think about what God may be teaching you right now. Is He reminding you of your dependency on Him, just like the Israelites had to depend on Him in the middle of the desert? (There is probably no faster way to learn who is really in control.) God wants us to follow Him and trust Him. And while we all hope that such lessons will not take 40 years, we must always be cognizant that our daily bread comes from Him, and Him alone.
We receive Jesus in the very ways Israel received the manna. First, we must be aware of our need, and be hungry for Him. Each person is responsible for growing in Him through a personal relationship, person by person, family by family. The Israelites were expected to gather manna in the same way. We do this each day, every day. We do so humbly, and with gratitude, knowing we don’t deserve it. Finally, we must take the gifts that have been provided to nourish our minds, bodies, and spirits.