

When Human Grumbling Meets Divine Grace

Exodus 16:2-15

² In the desert the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. ³ 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.”

⁴ 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. ⁵ 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.”

⁶ 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, ⁷ 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?” ⁸ 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.”

⁹ Then Moses told Aaron, “Say to the entire Israelite community, ‘Come before the Lord, for he has heard your grumbling.’”

¹⁰ 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.

¹¹ The Lord said to Moses, ¹² “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.’”

¹³ That evening quail came and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. ¹⁴ When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor. ¹⁵ 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.

1. Gratitude has a short-term memory.
2. The grass is always greener on the other side of the fence.
3. Grumbling is not always a bad thing.
4. God responds to human grumbling with acts of grace.