

Wellspring – Life & Teaching of Jesus **(44) Sermon on the Mount – Daily Bread (Matt 6:11)**

“Give us today our daily bread. (Matt 6:11)

Daily provision

Previously we focused on this phrase and saw that it was valid to ask God to meet our daily practical needs for the provision of food, drink and shelter, but that our main emphasis in prayer should remain on the kingdom of God – “your kingdom come”. Jesus goes on to say that we are not to worry or get concerned about our daily provision because God knows what we need, and if we seek first his kingdom, all these things will be added to us (v33).

Spiritual Bread

In **Deut 8:3** God tells the Israelites that the reason why he fed them manna in the wilderness (ie provided for their daily physical needs) was “*that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.*” There is spiritual food that we can partake of daily, and this is far more important to our well-being than any physical bread we may partake of.

"Ho! Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat. Yes, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend money for what is not bread, and your wages for what does not satisfy? Listen carefully to Me, and eat what is good, and let your soul delight itself in abundance. (Isa 55:1-2)

There is spiritual bread available without cost that will provide abundant nutrition for your soul. In John 6 Jesus refers to the manna in the wilderness and says “*Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is He who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world... I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst. (John 6:32-36)*

This bread is found in Jesus – what Jesus has purchased for me through the cross (his body and his blood) is more than sufficient to satisfy every need of my inner man – I need never go hungry or thirsty again! How do I eat of this bread – through the word of God – the whole focus of the word of God is to bring us into an encounter with the Son of God. It’s possible to study the word of God and to miss the whole point!

You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life. (John 5:39-40)

From the front of an old family Bible...

This Book contains the mind of God, the state of man, the way of salvation, the doom of sinners, and the happiness of believers. Its doctrines are holy, its precepts are binding, its histories are true, and its decisions are immutable. Read it to be wise, believe it to be safe, and practice it to be holy. It contains light to direct you, food to support you, and comfort to cheer you. It is the traveller’s map, the pilgrim’s staff, the pilot’s compass, the soldier’s sword, and the Christian’s charter. Here Paradise is restored, Heaven opened, and the Gates of Hell disclosed. Christ is its Grand Subject, our good its design, and the Glory of God its end. It should fill the memory, rule the heart, and guide the feet. Read it slowly, frequently, and prayerfully. It is a mine of wealth, a paradise of glory, and a river of pleasure. It is given you in life, will be opened at the judgment, and be remembered forever. It involves the highest responsibility, rewards the greatest labour, and condemns all who trifle with its holy contents. This volume is the Word of GOD.”

Psalm 119

This wonderful Psalm, consisting of 22 8 verse passages each beginning with a consecutive letter of the Hebrew alphabet, is generally thought to be a collection of David’s notes and sayings and fully and richly expresses his passion for God’s word and God’s law. No passage in scripture better expresses the benefits of the “daily bread” of God’s word in our lives.

There are seven different words used here for God’s word, many of which overlap in their use – but together they give a full spectrum of the power, riches and blessings of the word of God.

“Word” – *dabar* – 24 times in this Psalm – is the common OT word for the spoken word, appearing over 2500 times – as a verb it means to speak or to say, as a noun it means the spoken word – over 100 times in the OT we get the phrase “*the word of the Lord came to...*” and in *1 Sam 3:1* we read “*the word of the Lord was rare in those days.*”

“Law” – *tora* – 25 times in this Psalm – means the teaching of God – it carries the idea of a wise man teaching his son how to live – so God teaches his people – wisdom for life.

“Testimony” – *eda* or *edut* – 23 times in this Psalm – this means the word of a witness and was used in court – its root carries the idea of continuance or repetition – to do or to state again – a witness is someone who repeats or states again what he has seen.

“Statute” – *hoq* or *huqqa* – 22 times in this Psalm – this means a legally binding statute or law that has been written down or engraved in stone – the root means to scratch or engrave.

“Precepts” – *piqqudim* – 21 times in this Psalm – this word is only used in the Psalms (all but 3 in Ps 119) – a general word meaning the responsibilities that God places on his people – its root is in the word *paqad* which means to exercise oversight over a subordinate, or to be attentive to or to attend to with care. It therefore has the idea of God caring for his people and setting out principles for their good and well-being.

“Commandments” – *miswa* or *mitzvah* – 22 times in the Psalm – means something which has been commanded or appointed by God – one of its derivatives means “signpost” – something appointed to mark out the way – the Jewish term *Bar Mitzvah* means “son of the commandment” and signifies a young male who has come of age.

“Judgments” – *mispat* – 23 times in the Psalm – means the decision or judgement of God as supreme ruler of the universe – it is about exercising the process of government – which in ancient times was primarily about the will and desires of the ruler – so it’s a word that conveys a decision by someone in a position of authority or rule.

The benefits of God’s word...

These are some of the David’s descriptions of the benefits and blessings of the word of God in his life: cleansing, freedom from sin, deliverance, understanding (more than my teachers), wisdom (more than my enemies), light, joy and delight, counsel, help, revival of my soul, strengthen my soul, enlarge my heart, walk in God’s path, walk in freedom, receive hope, comfort, receive tender mercy, know God’s faithfulness, receive life, sweeter than honey, a lamp to my feet, a light to my path, know God as my hiding place and protection, God’s face to shine upon me, purity, know the truth.

David’s attitude to God’s word...

These are some of the words David uses to describe his heart attitude towards the word of God: meditate (in the day, at night), contemplate, consider, diligently keep, hide in my heart, delight in, never forget, remain teachable, seek understanding, turn my eyes from worthless things, cling to, observe whole heartedly, walk in, incline my heart, long for, trust, hope in, speak of, not be ashamed of, love, believe, sing, turn my feet to, taste and eat, tremble, cry out with a whole heart, stand in awe, choose to walk in.

What is my daily bread?

What do I look to for daily sustenance for my soul – my mind, my will, my emotions? My favourite TV program or soap? Films? Magazines? Social activities? Sport? A hobby? My work? There is nothing wrong with most of these things, but if I look to these things for my daily source of sustenance or acceptance, they assume the place that God should have in my life and become an idol. Jesus was able to enjoy an active social life, he was an interesting and exciting person to be with, he was full of joy and laughter, but his daily sustenance came from one source alone.

My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work. (John 4:34)

A life focussed on the word of God is a life that does the will of God. That is my daily bread!