

A Sermon Series on the Lord's Prayer  
Part Seven: *"Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread"*  
By Rev. Ruth Ragovin  
First Christian Church, Murray, KY, August 15, 2021

**The Fifth Petition: *"Hawvlan lachma d'sunqanan yaomana /  
Give us this day our daily bread."* (Matthew 6:11)**



*"Give us this day our daily bread": Schmidt's Pastry Cottage volunteer Tyler Bodell hands out two loaves of bread to an area resident at Cyprus High School in Magna during a Free Bread Project giveaway on Sunday. By [Deseret News Photographers@DNewsPhoto](mailto:DeseretNewsPhotographers@DNewsPhoto) May 17, 2020*  
<https://www.deseret.com/utah/2020/5/17/21261534/give-us-this-day-our-daily-bread-bakery-gives-away-bread-to-residents-in-magna-area>

"Give us this day our daily (Greek = *"epiousios"*) bread." No such word found anywhere else but in Matthew's Gospel until recently, when it turned up on a papyrus fragment that was a woman's shopping list.

"Give us this day our **daily** bread." Disciples would have been reminded of story in Exodus 16:1-21 when their Hebrew ancestors were starving in the wilderness on their way to the Promised Land and God sent them manna.

In Jesus' time, bread was the basic food supporting life and many stories from Jewish tradition are related to bread.

Making bread is a **divine/human effort**. God told Adam when being cast out of the Garden of Eden: *"<sup>19</sup> By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread"* (Genesis 3:17-19).

Abraham offered bread to three strangers as **sign of hospitality**. It says in Genesis 18 that Abraham, who was sitting at the entrance to his tent: *"<sup>2</sup> looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. <sup>3</sup> He said ... <sup>5</sup> Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant." ... <sup>6</sup> Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make [bread] cakes."*

Jewish grace: *"Blessed art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe, who bringest forth bread from the earth."*

Christian grace: *"God is great. God is good. Let us thank God for our food. By His hands we must be led, Give us, Lord, our daily bread. Amen."*

Jesus' **Feeding of the Multitudes** is so important that it is the only story outside the Resurrection that is found in all four Gospels. Jesus was concerned about people's hunger, saying *"I have compassion for the crowd, because they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat; and I do not want to send them away hungry, for they might faint on the way."* (Matt 15:32) *"<sup>41</sup>Taking the five loaves and the two fish, [Jesus] looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to his disciples to set before the people; and he divided the two fish among them all. <sup>42</sup> And all ate and were filled ..."* (Mark 6:41-42)

How our God loves to feed us! Jesus loved to share meals with people. Every week we gather to remember Jesus' final meal with his disciples where he broke bread, that came to represent his body, being given over for us. In the Gospel of Luke we read that after taking the cup *"he took the bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying 'This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of me.'"* (Lk 22:19)

After his resurrection, Jesus was recognized by the two disciples on the road to Emmaus only when they invited him to their home for a meal. It says in Luke's Gospel that: *<sup>30</sup> When he was at the table with them, he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. <sup>31</sup> Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him ..."* (Lk 24:30-31). In John's Gospel, Jesus appeared to the disciples after his resurrection as well, feeding them bread and fish. John 21:13-14 says that *"<sup>43</sup> Jesus came and took the bread and gave it to them, and did the same with the fish. <sup>14</sup> This was now the third time that Jesus appeared to the disciples after he was raised from the dead."* (Jn 21:13-14)

Bread also appears at the beginning of Jesus' ministry too. In Matthew, it states: *"Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. <sup>2</sup> He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. <sup>3</sup> The tempter came and said to him, 'If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.'" <sup>4</sup> But he answered, 'It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" (Mt. 4:1-4).*

Aramaic word *lachma* is both "bread" and "understanding" or "wisdom." This is the kind of bread that Jesus referred to as "every word that comes from the mouth of God." He told his disciples: *"<sup>27</sup> Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. ... 'Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. <sup>33</sup> For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.'" <sup>34</sup> They said to him, 'Sir, give us this bread always.'" <sup>35</sup> Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.'" (John 6:27,32-35)*

Notice that Jesus did not say to pray "give me this day my daily bread." He says give US this day OUR daily bread. And it is here that bread moves beyond being an individual material need to being a shared need that takes others into account.

*"The question of bread for myself is a material question, but the question of bread for my neighbor is a spiritual question." ~ Nikolai Berdyaev*

Are you taking seriously the petition in the Lord's Prayer that says "give us this day our daily bread" by helping to feed the many hungry in our community and world?