

Dare to Draw Near

RESPONDING TO GOD'S INVITATION

Lesson 7 Reflection: *The Table of Showbread*

Review For several weeks now we have been talking about daring to draw near to the Lord. We have looked at things that draw us closer and things that can keep us at a distance while using the Old Testament Tabernacle as our template.

This week we go deeper into the Tabernacle and come to the Table of Showbread. This was a small wooden table about 3 by 5 feet that was covered with gold. Every week on the Sabbath the priests placed 12 loaves of bread on this table.

The 12 Loaves

The 12 loaves of bread represented the 12 tribes of Israel. While the 12 tribes joined together made up the nation of Israel, each tribe also stood alone as a separate community. When we go back and look at our picture of the Tabernacle, we notice that the 12 tribes of Israel were stationed and camped outside the white linen fence of the Tabernacle. The placement of each tribe was dictated specifically by God. The Tabernacle was the center of this arrangement. And the significance of this design is a picture of God's plan for community --- He wants to be at the center of it. He wants to be the main focus!

God loves for us to live in unity. In fact, Jesus prayed in John 17:22-24 that we would be one with Him and one with the Father and also *one with one another*, in order that the world would know that Jesus was sent by the Father because He loves us!! Being in a community with Jesus as the center proves to the world that Jesus is real!

The *power of unity* is also real - we looked at the Tower of Babel for proof that even unity around ungodly things has power. Satan's does his best to destroy our unity with fellow believers and we discussed several of those ways in the video.

The Bread

The bread on the Table of Showbread also speaks of God's nourishment and provision for His children --- for both our physical and spiritual needs. In the spiritual sense, the bread pictures the Word of God, which is vital for our spiritual sustenance. As Jesus said in Matthew 4:4, "Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God."

This week we focused upon the Greek word *rhema* that is often translated in our English Bibles *word of God*. We talked a lot about the importance of receiving *rhema* words from the Lord as we read or hear passages from the Bible. This is one of the ways the Lord encourages, corrects, strengthens and instructs us. Receiving *rhema* words from the Lord is essential for us to dare to draw near to the Lord.

Notes

Prayer Exercise

This week we are going to practice a meditative prayer exercise that will assist us in receiving a *rhema* word from the Lord. We will outline simple steps that you can complete either by yourself or with a small group.

Before you begin, ask the Lord to lead you to a short passage in the Bible for your meditation. The Psalms are a great place to start.

First Reading

Ask the Holy Spirit to speak to you through the verse or passage. While reading the passage the first time, let the words wash over you.

Second Reading

Ask the Lord to highlight a word or phrase from the Scripture that He wants you to consider. Read the same passage a second time, Take some time to meditate on the passage. Once you receive a word or phrase, write it down or share it with your group.

Third Reading

Ask the Lord for more amplification and insight concerning your word or phrase you just received. As you consider the passage a third time, wait on the Lord. He may give you a picture in your minds eye, or some sensory perception, or He may bring up a memory or a recent thought. He is creative, so just trust that He has more for you. After several moments of waiting on Him, either write down what you received or share with your group.

Fourth Reading

As you hear/read the passage for the fourth time, ask the Lord for an invitation of how to apply this word to your life this week. Is there specific direction? Is there some action the Lord is calling you to take or some specific situation to which this word applies? How will you carry this word into your life this week? Write down your invitation or share it with your group.

Finish this exercise with prayer about your invitation. Pray about how you will apply this word to your life this week. If you received a *rhema* word from the Lord be sure to write it down in your journal. You want to claim it, stand on it, believe it, and rest your faith on it!

Lecture Notes:

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