

AUGUST 12th

GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD

"And you shall set the bread of the Presence on the table before me regularly." EXODUS 25:30

Homer's Odyssey was written well over 3,000 years ago and just came to the big screen in movie theatres all over the world. What was once archaic language has been brought into the 21st Century. I recently watched the film, and it certainly lived up to its reputation. I couldn't help but think during the film how distinct our God is from the Greek gods that are discussed in the film. Our God is marvelous and perfect, without need of anyone or anything...which is quite different from these gods that have long since been forgotten from Greek mythology. While these Greek gods are forgotten in our culture, are we much removed from thinking that we offer food to a god in our culture? Think about it this way...ever heard of kids leaving out cookies for Santa? It's not much different than the belief that the ancient gods needed food to survive. In his commentary on Exodus U. Cassuto claimed, "In Mesopotamia they would arrange on the table the foods that had been prepared as a meal for the gods...the practice was based on the belief that the gods, who, like human beings, also needed food...". Some interpreters link this belief with what is going on with the Bread of Presence in Exodus 25. They claim that Yahweh commanded bread to be put on the Table because He needed bread to survive. What does God mean when He commands the bread to be placed on the Table and what does it mean for us today as His men?

Frankly, Exodus 25:30 doesn't give much information about the purpose of the Bread of Presence. However, you can discover its purpose later in Leviticus 24: 8-9: "Every Sabbath day Aaron shall arrange it before the Lord regularly; it is from the people of Israel as a covenant forever. And it shall be for Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat it in a holy place, since it is for him a most holy portion out of the Lord's food offerings, a perpetual due." What details do you see here? There are two here and one in the immediate verses before verses eight and nine. Every Sabbath day is significant. The Bread is to be replaced every week, which reminds God's people that His providence is freshly given to His people. Ever had stale bread? It's hard and crusty, even with butter or jelly applied to it. While it may fill the belly, it doesn't satisfy. God is showing Himself to be different here. God gives fresh "bread" to His people, both spiritually and physically. God takes care of His people. This was never about God needing people to feed Him weekly so He could care for them. This was always about God reminding the people that He cared for them, and He was always giving fresh food to His people. In the immediate context, the bread is for Aaron and his sons. However, in our world today, God calls us his priests. We represent Christ to our world and intercede for them. Therefore, it's important for us to eat His Bread daily so we can offer proper food for others to take. I believe Martin Luther stated, "I'm just a beggar helping other beggars find food." I ask you this question...how's your daily food intake going?

How much bread was given each week on the Table? Go ahead and guess...it's a significant number, one that is repeated throughout the Bible. If you guessed twelve, you are correct! But what does this mean to Israel and what does it mean to us? Twelve loaves points to the twelve tribes of Israel. The significance of the number of loaves is that God provides for all of the people. Even as Aaron and his sons are the ones that eat the Bread, God shows that the Bread was given for all of the people. God gives His food equally to all people. It's up to us to come and eat our fill. Jesus points back to this Bread of Presence in John 6. He makes the startling claim that He is the Bread of Life! Whoever eats His bread will live forever. God foreshadows Jesus in the Bread of Presence. The overall story of the Tabernacle is that God lives with His people...and God ultimately adds to Himself human flesh in the Person of Jesus—the Bread of Life! What an amazing God!

Spend some time thinking about God's Bread that He's given us. Thank Him for giving Jesus to give us exactly what we need. Ask Him for wisdom to share God's Bread with others today.

For Further Reading: John 6:22-59