

THE TABLE OF BREAD

“For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” —JOHN 6:33

Having passed by the altar and the basin, we enter from the courtyard into the tabernacle. In the first section, called the Holy Place, there were three pieces of furniture which one would pass by before gaining access to the inner room, the Most Holy Place containing the Ark of the Covenant. On the north side, to the right when entering, was a table on which the “bread of the presence” was placed. This bread was twelve loaves in two rows of six, freshly renewed every Sabbath day. Aaron and his sons were to eat the loaves as part of the ritual of the offerings. Here, they would find sustenance and strength.

God does more than justify us by the blood of Christ and keep us clean. We need strengthening and sustaining. The bread is described as the “bread of his presence”, because it is Christ Himself who is our strength. He said, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry” (John 6:35). It is not fellowship with other Christians, not good teaching, doctrine, great experiences or even the Bible that is the bread that sustains and strengthens. These are all good and valid and may be a means of bringing Christ to us, but they can never be a substitute for Him. We could hear many sermons and expositions on the Word of God, but if they do not leave us with Christ, they will not sustain; they will only perpetuate spiritual immaturity and leave us dissatisfied.

This is the primary reason we are to read the Scriptures. It is through the written word that we discover the Living Word, for the supreme revelation of Christ is in the Bible. If we read the Bible for the primary purpose of getting to know it, it will have little true value or effect in our lives. It may make us biblically literate and doctrinally aware, but will leave us spiritually poor. It is Jesus, alone, who satisfies.

To the Samaritan woman, ostracized by her community and in the heat of day, retrieving water from a well, Jesus said, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give them will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to eternal life” (John 4:13-14). Whatever our need, whatever our prayer, Jesus not only quenches our thirst, but is the bread of life that sustains, satisfies and fills us.

PRAYER: Thank You, Lord, for being in me the bread of life. I ask that You continue to nourish me in such a way that I will be filled with You.

TO REFLECT UPON: To what degree am I drawing my daily sustenance from Christ?