

“The Lord’s Prayer. Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread”

The Present Truth – December 13, 1900

E. J. Waggoner

Whom does all the bread in the world belong to? Jesus has taught us to go every day to our Heavenly Father, and ask for our bread for that day, “our daily bread.” This shows that all the bread, all the food that there is anywhere, belongs to God, and He is the only One that can give it to us. “The earth is the Lord’s, and the fulness thereof.” He says, “If I were hungry I would not tell thee, for the world is Mine, and the fulness thereof.”

This shows us also that in whatever way our food comes to us, it is in reality the gift of God. Do you think that your daily bread belongs to your father, who earns it by his hard labour, or your mother, who prepares it for you, and that they are the ones who give it to you? Think, then, who gives the life and strength by which your father works to get bread for you, and your mother is able to take care of you and provide for your needs. It is God who “giveth to all, life, and breath, and all things.” So all the bread belongs to God, and He gives it freely to all.

When the children of Israel were wandering in the wilderness, God wanted to teach them that He was the One who fed them and supplied their every need, so instead of giving them their food in the way that He usually provides it, He “rained down bread from heaven” for them. Day by day the manna fell upon their encampment, and they drank the living water that He caused to flow from the rock to quench their thirst.

When their wanderings were over, and they were about to enter the promised land, Moses saw that there was danger of their soon forgetting that the same God of love was still, providing for their daily needs, only in a different way from when the bread fell down direct from heaven for them. So he warned them that when the time should come that they would have plenty of silver and gold and flocks and herds, and food to eat and drink, they should not say in their hearts, “My power, and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth. But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God, for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth.”

So in whatever way our food comes to us, it is God who opens His hand and “satisfies the desire of every living thing,” and all that anyone can do is, like the birds and the beasts, and all living creatures that He feeds, to gather what He gives.

For God not only feeds all mankind, but all of His creatures “seek their meat from God.” He who made all things makes for each creature just the food that is best suited for it, and teaches it where to find it and how to get it. “Who provideth for the raven his food, when his young ones cry unto God?” was one of the questions that the Lord asked Job. And this is answered in the 147th psalm: “He giveth to the beast his food, and to the young ravens which cry.” So the cry of the hungry raven,

as of every other bird and beast and living thing, is a cry to God for food, and He hears and answers.

But in our little picture you will see how God gives the food to the young ravens which cry. He does not Himself drop it into their mouths, but he uses the parent bird to supply their needs. He provides the food, and teaches the father and mother birds to gather it for themselves and their little ones. And so it is with His little children; He gives strength to the father and mother to gather for His little ones and for themselves the daily bread that He has provided for them.

“He causeth grass to grow for the cattle,
And herb for the labour of man;
That he may bring forth bread out of the earth.”

But do you think you would like to be as the children of Israel were in the wilderness, or, as the multitude whom Jesus fed in the desert, and receive your food directly from His hands, or see Him rain it down from heaven for you? Do you not know that God is still raining down bread from heaven day by day, and that all that comes upon your table has come to the earth in this way?

Read what God says of this in Isaiah: “The rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater.” What is it that gives “bread to the eater”? It is the rain and snow that God sends down from heaven. We are told also in His Word that the showers that water the earth from “the river of God which is full of water,” greatly enrich it and fill it with corn, and crown the year with His goodness. So as we see the rain fall we may remember that God is as really raining down bread from heaven for us as He did for the children of Israel. Let us ask Him to open our eyes, so we may see Him everywhere, in all things, working out His loving purposes of good to all His creatures, and give thanks to Him whose “tender mercies are over all His works,” and who gives us each day “our daily bread.”

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Have you ever thought of the wonderful working of God’s power that provides for you your daily bread? The Lord God made man “from the dust of the ground,” in the beginning, and He is still by the same creative power, forming our bodies from the dust of the ground. But if we should take a handful of dust and feed upon it, it would not do us any good, but only harm, for we could not digest nor assimilate it.

The word “assimilate” means, to become like unto. And we must assimilate our food, before it can do us any good. Yet we could never assimilate the dust of the

ground; that is, it could never be made into our substance, into flesh and blood, so as to become a part of us.

So God takes the dust and prepares it for us in a beautiful and pleasant way; He changes it so that we can feed upon it and assimilate it, and in thus changing it, He puts lovely colours upon it, sweet and pleasant savours into it, and makes it "pleasant to the sight" as well as "good for food." The grains, fruits, and nuts are what He has provided for our food.

He says, "Behold I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you shall be for meat."

The plants take up the dust of the ground, which is food for them, and the life of God working in them changes the dust and prepare it for our food. Then that same wondrous life of the Creator working in us takes the substance of the plant, and makes it a part of our flesh and blood. And thus God makes our bodies from the dust of the ground.

Think what wonderful power there is in the words which God spoke of the trees and plants, when He said, "To you it shall be for meat." And how much meaning there is in the daily prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread." It means far more than that God should provide us with something to eat. For nothing could be meat or food for us, except by the working of the same mighty power that made us and that made the food, changing it into flesh and blood to build up our bodies.

You eat when you are hungry, and it seems a most natural thing to you that your food should nourish you. But the food must be prepared in your stomach, where it is changed into a kind of milky substance that can be carried in your veins to your heart, from which it is pumped into the lungs, where it is purified and sent down again into the heart. Then it is sent through your arteries into every part of your body, and without your thought or care, the food that the blood carries is formed into your skin, your nails, your bones, your muscles, and the hairs of your head.

Will you not keep these things in mind, not only when you ask your Heavenly Father for your daily bread, but when you take that which He provides and feed upon it? If you do, your heart will be filled with love for Him whose power is thus working in you every moment, and you will let Him use for His own glory the life and strength that He imparts to you day by day, in giving you your daily bread.