

THE sample prayer given by Yeshua The Messiah in Matthew 6 and Luke 11 contains several requests, all of them legitimate because He listed them. Yeshua would not tell His own to pray for something that would not be answered, would He? I do not think so.

"Thy Kingdom come" is the first request. How we long for its fulfillment and Yeshua's soon return! Is there any doubt in any of our minds that this will be literally fulfilled, sooner or later, even though it has been nearly 2000 years since He gave this sample prayer? With events developing in and around Israel, our anticipation is growing!

The second request, as translated, is a bit different. There is no long wait for a future, one time fulfillment. There is supposed to be a daily fulfillment for this request. In Luke 11:3 it reads in English, "Give us each day our daily bread." In Matthew 6:11 it reads, "Give us this day our daily bread."

Has this request been consistently fulfilled, answered by Yeshua and the Father? A quick survey of the suffering and starvation of true Believers today in quite a few countries would require a negative answer. This particular prayer request has NOT been fulfilled in many cases. It has been this way for a long time in various parts of the world.

So whose fault is it, that this prayer for our daily bread, our food for the day, has not been answered for some of our Brethren around the world? Certainly we would not accuse Yeshua of misleading us, although that thought surely might have come to many who were starving to death. Why, cannot Yeshua send the ravens or someone to bring me some food? Yes, He can, but apparently He has chosen not to in many cases. Why?

If we cannot fault Yeshua, and we really cannot, then it must be our fault. Maybe those starving did not pray in full faith. Maybe there was sin in their lives. Maybe they had partially denied Yeshua under pressure or severe torture. There might be many other reasons if we follow this train of thought, which is so common today.

Yes, it has to be our fault, but not for any of the reasons just stated. Actually, it is not really the fault of all of us, but of only a few of us. Who are those few? The fault lies at the feet of the ones who translated our Bible into English, and probably the ones who translated

it into other languages as well. Bible translation is difficult, very difficult if one wants to be as exact as possible. However, Bible publishing is big business and it might be that exactness is not as important to publishers as salability. Ever question why there are so many English translations and paraphrases on the market today?

In both passages, Matthew 6 and Luke 11, there is one unique word that is wrongly translated. This unique word occurs only in these two passages in the Bible and appar-

ently does not occur in other Greek literature of the day. Sometime after Yeshua, Origen (a church "father") testifies "that the word was not in use in ordinary speech, and accordingly seems to have been coined by the Evangelists themselves." In other words, Yeshua gave a brand new word to His writers, Matthew and Luke, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit! Is this not exciting? Yeshua wanted to make sure His people got the message, a message His early followers got very well, since they spoke Hebrew and Greek freely, were taught by the Holy Spirit, and could understand this new word in biblical context and the structure of the word. The writers of the Newer Testament thought in Hebrew and wrote in Greek, an important factor to be considered.

Before I tell you the word, consider the context in the Bible related to bread or food. How did Yeshua answer the devil when tempted to turn stones into bread when He was hungry after 40 days of fasting? "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of יהוה,"¹ which was a quote from Deuteronomy 8:3.

The purpose of manna in the wilderness was to teach the Israelis who came out of Egypt to live by the promise of יהוה that there would be manna on the ground each day except on Shabbat. Manna was a daily provision, enough for only one day, no extra for tomorrow, except that on the 6th day they could gather double so that food for Shabbat was provided. Is that not a neat way to teach? They were to live by the words of יהוה, His promises, trusting Him, and their food would be taken care of.

¹ This is the *Yod-Hay-Vav-Hay*, the tetragrammaton that stands for the name of God

Now consider the context of the wilderness Tabernacle, which should be a required, detailed study for every Believer and every congregational leader/teacher! There is MUCH truth in this unique structure, patterned after the real, eternal Tabernacle in heaven. Exodus 25:23-30 describes the construction of the table of showbread. Literally it is the bread of the face, or bread of the presence. Whose face or whose presence? The face of יהוה, of course! Who else? So here we have literal bread somehow representing the Presence or Face of יהוה.

In addition, Yeshua said at the Last Supper Pesach that the matza was there to represent His Body, a historical Truth that He revealed only that night. With these four examples of literal bread or manna, actual food, being used by יהוה to refer to Himself or His words, we have a basic teaching that should carry through the whole Bible.

So we ask the question, does "Give us this day our daily bread" refer to literal food for our physical bodies? Since that prayer request has not always been answered in a positive manner throughout history, let us look for a deeper, spiritual meaning related to the four examples cited above. Will that special, unique word help to solve the question? Yes, it will!

The unique word in question is *epiousios*. It does not mean "daily," which is expressed many times in the NT by *kath hemeran* (including Luke 11:3), or "today" by *semeran* (including Mt 6:11). Since *epiousios* is so unique, there is disagreement among scholars as to the derivation of the word. It is apparently made up of two words, *epi* and *ousios*. *Epi* is a preposition, which generally means "upon" or "on," but here it is used as a prefix to make a compound word. *Ousios* may come from *ousia*, but there is no agreement about that. *Ousia* generally means "essence, real nature, or substance, property, resources." Putting these together we can get something like "upon or on the essence or substance." This is not smooth English, but remember, this is a unique word that scholars cannot figure out and come to agreement on, except to water it down to mean "daily."

A few translations say something like, "Give us today the bread we need," but again that does not indicate anything other than physical bread. The one translation that seemed to indicate an awareness of this unique word was the Latin Vulgate that was translated into English as the Douay-Rheims Version. In this version, Matthew 6:11 reads, "Give us this day our super-substantial bread," but in Luke 11:3

it reads, "Give us this day our daily bread." The Greek is the same, so why the difference? At least there is some awareness of *epiousios* by using "super-substantial" rather than "daily" in Matthew.

So put it together in whatever smooth English you like best, remembering the context and possible literal meaning of *epiousios*. One suggestion, "Give us each day our bread, the bread of Your essence or real nature." If *ousias* does not come directly from *ousia*, then it might mean more simply, "Give us each day our bread, the Presence, or of Your Presence," relating to the showbread, the matza, the manna. Or even more simply, "Give us today the bread of Your Presence."

This prayer request is sure to be answered positively! We can be absolutely certain that we can live "by every word that proceeds from the mouth of יהוה." Maybe this is what Yeshua meant when He told His disciples, "I have food to eat of which you do not know." (John 4:31-34.) The disciples had gone into town to get food while Yeshua rested at the well and talked with the Samaritan woman. When they returned with food, they were amazed that He refused it, asking if anyone else had brought Him food. Yeshua also said at this incident, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to accomplish His work."

A lot of ministry today is based on the physical and material, health and wealth. This treats יהוה as a miracle-working doctor and supply sergeant, to wait upon us. What an insulting treatment of יהוה! He is not our servant! We are His servants, whether in health or not, and whether in wealth or poverty. Not that יהוה is not interested in our health and material well-being, but rather our spiritual well-being is most important to Him. He says through John in 3 John 2, "Beloved, I wish above all things that you may prosper and be in health, even as your soul prospers."

By understanding that "our daily bread" means "the bread of His Presence" to nourish us spiritually, we take the "high ground" of Scripture, having our focus on יהוה and His purposes, not on ourselves in our self-centered human nature. We also deal properly with a unique word, *epiousios*, coined by יהוה to be sure we think His thoughts with Him. We will also do as He said, "Seek first the kingdom of יהוה and His righteousness" and He will take care of all the mundane things in life, of which we think too much. ה

Reference for *epiousios*: *The New Thayer's Greek English Lexicon*, p. 241.