

The Lord's Prayer – 3



Give us this day our daily bread.

Matthew 6:11

Give us our daily bread according to the day.

Luke 11:3

1. *What does bread correspond to?*

John 6:33-35. [And Jesus said,] the Bread of God is He who comes down out of heaven, and gives life to the world. Then said they to Him, Lord, always give us this bread. And Jesus said to them, I am the Bread of Life; he who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.

John 6:51. I am the Living Bread which came down out of heaven; if anyone eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread also that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

AC 4217. When “bread” is mentioned in the Word, the angels become aware not of material but of spiritual bread; thus instead of bread they perceive the Lord, who is the Bread of life, as He Himself teaches in John 6:33, 35. And because they perceive the Lord, they perceive what is from the Lord, thus His love toward the universal human race; and they then perceive at the same time man’s reciprocal love to the Lord; for these two things cohere in one idea of thought and affection.

Not unlike this are the thoughts of the man who is in a holy state when receiving the bread of the Holy Supper; for he then thinks not of bread, but of the Lord and His mercy, and of what is of love to Him and of charity toward the neighbor, because he thinks of repentance and amendment of life; but this with variety according to the holiness in which he is, not only as to his thought, but also as to his affection. From this it is manifest that “bread” as mentioned in the Word suggests to the angels no idea of bread, but the idea of love, together with innumerable things that are of love.

SD 6088. FOOD IN THE SPIRITUAL WORLD. They eat and drink there, just as in the natural world; but all food there is from a spiritual origin: wherefore, it is not obtained beforehand, but is given daily. When it is dinner-time, and also when it is supper-time, a table furnished with food appears while the meal-time lasts, and disappears when they have dined, or supped. All spirits whatsoever, are supplied with food according to their employments—rulers sumptuously, with much pomp, the magnificence of which cannot be described; the rest less sumptuously according to their condition. Be it observed that everyone is provided with food according to the labors which he performs....

All in the hells are forced to work and those who do not work receive neither food, nor garments, nor bed. Thus, they are driven into labors. The reason is, because idleness is the root of all wickedness; for in idleness, the mind is spread out to various evils and falsities; but in work, it is held to one thing. Food cannot be kept till the morrow: worms breed in it, as in the manna. This is signified in the Lord’s prayer: “Give us daily bread,” and also by the circumstance that nothing of the paschal lamb, nor of the sacrifices, was to be laid by till the morrow.

Inasmuch as the food is from a spiritual origin, and so is in itself spiritual, and since spirits and angels are men, and are furnished with a spiritual body, therefore such spiritual nourishment is adequate for them. A spiritual being is, therefore, nourished in this spiritual manner, and a material man materially. As all things that appear in the spiritual world correspond to the affections, and to the thoughts of the understanding thence, their houses, garments, fields, gardens, paradises do so—all of which, likewise, are from a spiritual origin; and good affection, together with the thought of the understanding of truth, cannot exist in idleness, but is dispersed. Therefore, food does not exist otherwise than according to correspondences.

Questions and Comments

1. When we say “give us this day our daily bread,” what comes to mind?
2. Does knowing the correspondence of bread change what we might think about when say this part of the Lord’s Prayer?
3. Does saying the Lord’s Prayer ever leave us with the impression of being fed?
4. What stories in the Word involve the Lord providing bread? Does it help to picture one of these stories when we think about this part of the Lord’s Prayer?

2. *What does “daily” correspond to?*

Isaiah 58:2. Yet day by day they inquire after Me, and in the knowledge of My ways they delight, as a nation that has done justice, and has not forsaken the judgment of their God, that they might ask of Me the judgments of justice; they delight in approaching God.

AC 2838.4. That “daily” and “this day” signify what is perpetual, is also evident from the sacrifice which was made every day. This, on account of the signification of “day,” “daily,” and “this day,” was called the continual or perpetual sacrifice (Num. 28:3, 23; Deut. 8:13; 11:31; 12:11). This is still more plainly evident from the manna which rained from heaven, of which it is thus said in Moses:

Behold I will rain bread from heaven; and the people shall go out and gather a portion day by day; and let no man leave of it till the morning. What they left till the morning bred worms, and putrefied, except what was kept the day before the Sabbath (Exod. 16:4, 19-20, 23).

This was because the manna signified the Lord’s Divine Human (John 6:31, 32, 49, 50, 58). And because it signified the Lord’s Divine Human, it signified heavenly food, which is nothing else than love and charity together with the goods and truths of faith. This food is given by the Lord in the heavens to the angels every moment, and thus perpetually and to eternity (see n. 2493). This also is what is meant in the Lord’s Prayer by, “Give us this day our daily bread” (Matt. 6:11; Luke 11:3); that is, every instant to eternity.

AC 2493. I have spoken with the angels concerning the memory of things past, and the consequent anxiety regarding things to come; and I have been instructed that the more interior and perfect the angels are, the less do they care for past things, and the less do they think of things to come; and also that from this comes their happiness. They say that the Lord gives them every moment what to think, and this with blessedness and happiness; and that they are thus free from cares and anxieties. Also, that this was meant in the internal sense by the manna being received daily from heaven; and by the daily bread in the Lord’s Prayer; and likewise by the instruction not to be solicitous about what they should eat and drink, and wherewithal they should be clothed. But although the angels do not care for past things, and are not solicitous about things to come, they nevertheless have the most perfect recollection of past things, and the most perfect mental view of things to come; because in all their present there are both the past and the future. Thus they have a more perfect memory than can ever be thought of or expressed.

SD 361. THAT WE SHOULD PRAY DAILY FOR THE HEAVENLY KINGDOM: AND THUS WHAT IS MEANT BY “DAILY.”

By “daily” in the Lord’s prayer is meant every moment, which can be confirmed by experience, and thus be understood; namely, that those to whom eternal happiness is shown suppose that they have been at once carried away into heaven. So those who have come out of temptations suppose that thus they have become the eternal heirs of the Kingdom; those who have labored in the vineyard also suppose that thus they ought to have eternal salvation, which they hence attribute to themselves. The contrary, however, is shown to them, namely, that they are again cast into dangers, into temptations, into perils and the like, on account of damnation. Hence it can be concluded, that “daily” signifies every moment in things successive. But in their simultaneous things, however, this is changed into a continuous glorification of God Messiah, so that the moments are continuous without differentiation. Hence are their perception and felicities, and their [belief] that they continually receive this from God Messiah. 1747, Dec. 17.

Questions and Comments

1. When we say “daily” in the Lord’s Prayer, it seems from AC 2838 that “perpetually” is what is meant spiritually. Does this help make this part of the prayer more meaningful?
2. In AC 2493 it says “the Lord gives [angels] every moment what to think, and this with blessedness and happiness; and that they are thus free from cares and anxieties.” How can we reconcile this teaching with the idea that angels are in freedom?
3. If “daily” means every moment according to SD 361, should we say the Lord’s Prayer more than once a day?

3. Why should we ask the Lord for our daily bread?

Luke 1: 53. He has filled the hungry with good things.

Matthew 5:6. Happy are they who hunger and thirst after justice, for they shall be satisfied.

AR 323.3. "Famine" or "hunger" signifies the desire of knowing and understanding the truths and goods of the church.

Psalm 107:8-9

Let them confess to Jehovah His mercy,
And His wonders for the sons of man;
For He satisfies the craving soul,
And the hungry soul He fills with good.

AE 386.19. To "satisfy the longing soul, and to fill with good the hungry soul," applies to those who long for truths and goods, "the longing soul" signifying those who long for truths, and "the hungry soul" those who long for goods.

Psalm 146:5-7

Happy is he for whom the God of Jacob is his help;
Whose expectation is on Jehovah his God,
Who made the heavens and the earth,
The sea, and all that is in them;
Who keeps truth to eternity;
Who does judgment for the oppressed;
Who gives bread to the hungry....

AE 386.20. "The hungry" mean those who desire goods; and as such are nourished by the Lord, it is said "Jehovah gives bread to the hungry," "to give bread" meaning to nourish, and spiritual nourishment is knowledge, intelligence, and wisdom.

AC 5576.2-3. Hunger in the spiritual world or in heaven is not hunger for food, because the angels do not feed upon material food, which is for the body that man carries about in the world; but it is hunger for such food as nourishes their minds. This food, which is called spiritual food, is to understand truth and be wise in good; and wonderful to say the angels are nourished by this food; which has been made evident to me from the fact that after little children who die have been instructed in heaven in the truths of intelligence and the goods of wisdom, they no longer appear as little children, but as adults, and this according to their increase in good and truth; and also from the fact that the angels continually long for the things of intelligence and wisdom, and that when they are in the evening, that is, in a state in which these things fail, they

are so far in what is relatively not happiness, and they then hunger and long for nothing more than that the morning may dawn for them afresh, and that they may return into their life of happiness, which is of intelligence and wisdom.

That to understand truth and to will good is spiritual food, may also appear to everyone who reflects that when anyone is enjoying material food for the nourishment of the body, his food is more nourishing if he is at the same time in cheerful spirits and conversing on agreeable topics, which is a sign that there is a correspondence between spiritual food for the soul and material food for the body. And the same is further evident from the fact that when one who longs to imbue his mind with the things of knowledge, intelligence, and wisdom is kept from them, he begins to be saddened and distressed, and like one who is famished longs to return to his spiritual food, and thereby to the nourishment of his soul.

Questions and Comments

1. How does natural hunger help us understand spiritual hunger?
2. What should we do if we are not feeling spiritually hungry?
3. What should we do if we are not feeling as though our spiritual hunger is being fed?
4. What does it feel like when the Lord feeds our spiritual hunger?
5. AC 5576.3 states that “when anyone is enjoying material food for the nourishment of the body, his food is more nourishing if he is at the same time in cheerful spirits and conversing on agreeable topics.” How does this statement compare to experience?

4. *When we pray for daily bread, what does the Lord give us?*

Exodus 16: 19-20. And Moses said to them, Let no one make a residue of it until the morning. And they hearkened not to Moses; and some men made a remainder of it until the morning, and it bred worms and stank, and Moses was enraged with them.

Matthew 6:31-34. Be not therefore anxious, saying, what shall we eat? or, what shall we drink? or, with what shall we be arrayed? For all these things do the nations seek; for your Heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His justice, and all these things shall be added to you. Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow shall be anxious for the things of itself. Sufficient for the day is the evil of it.

AC 8478. As in this and the following verses in the internal sense care for the morrow is treated of, and as this care is not only forbidden, but is also condemned (that it is forbidden is signified by that they were not to make a residue of the manna till the morning, and that it is condemned is signified by that the worm was bred in the residue, and it stank), he who looks at the subject no deeper than from the sense of the letter may believe that all care for the morrow is to be cast aside, and thus that the necessities of life are to be awaited daily from heaven. But he who looks at the subject deeper than from the letter, as for instance he who looks at it from the internal sense, is able to know what is meant by "care for the morrow." It does not mean the care of procuring for oneself food and raiment, and even resources for the time to come, for it is not contrary to order for anyone to be provident for himself and his own. But those have care for the morrow who are not content with their lot; who do not trust in the Divine, but in themselves; and who have regard for only worldly and earthly things, and not for heavenly things. With such there universally reigns solicitude about things to come, and a desire to possess all things and to dominate over all, which is kindled and grows according to the additions thus made, and finally does so beyond all measure. They grieve if they do not obtain the objects of their desire, and feel anguish at the loss of them; and they have no consolation, because of the anger they feel against the Divine, which they reject together with everything of faith, and curse themselves. Such are they who have care for the morrow.

Very different is the case with those who trust in the Divine. These, notwithstanding they have care for the morrow, still have it not, because they do not think of the morrow with solicitude, still less with anxiety. Unruffled is their spirit whether they obtain the objects of their desire, or not; and they do not grieve over the loss of them, being content with their lot. If they become rich, they do not set their hearts on riches; if they are raised to honors, they do not regard themselves as more worthy than others; if they become poor, they are not made sad; if their circumstances are mean, they are not dejected. They know that for those who trust in the

Divine all things advance toward a happy state to eternity, and that whatever befalls them in time is still conducive thereto.

Be it known that the Divine Providence is universal, that is, in things the most minute; and that they who are in the stream of Providence are all the time carried along toward everything that is happy, whatever may be the appearance of the means; and that those are in the stream of Providence who put their trust in the Divine and attribute all things to Him.

Questions and Comments

1. What is the difference between prudently planning for the future and trying to collect more than the day's worth of manna?
2. What does it mean in AC 8474 when it says that those who trust in the Divine have care for the morrow, but still have it not?
3. What does it mean in 8474 to be content with our lot? Are we content with our lot? If so why? And if not, why not?
4. When we experience anxieties about future events or worries about something we know we will have to deal with, does it help to say just this portion of the Lord's Prayer?

5. *What happens in heaven when we pray for our daily bread?*

John 6:53-58. Then Jesus said to them, Amen, amen, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink His blood, you have no life in you. He who eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him again at the last day. For My flesh is truly food, and My blood is truly drink. He who eats My flesh, and drinks My blood, remains in Me, and I in him. As the living Father has sent Me, and I live by the Father, so he who eats Me, he also shall live by Me. This is the bread that came down out of heaven, not as your fathers ate manna and died; he who eats of this bread shall live forever.

AC 3735.2. When in a holy state a man thinks of bread, as for instance of the bread in the Holy Supper, or of the “daily bread” in the Lord’s Prayer, then the thought which the man has about bread serves the angels who are with him as an objective representative for thinking about the good of love which is from the Lord. For the angels apprehend nothing of man’s thought about bread, but instead of this have thought concerning good, for such is the correspondence. In like manner when in a holy state a man thinks about raiment, the thought of the angels is about truth; and so it is with everything else in the Word. This shows what is the nature of the conjunction of heaven and earth by the Word, namely, that a man who reads the Word in a holy manner is by such correspondence conjoined closely with heaven, and through heaven with the Lord, even though the man thinks only of those things in the Word which are in the sense of its letter. The holiness itself then present with the man comes from an influx of celestial and spiritual thoughts and affections, such as angels have.

AC 3316.2. When one reads of bread [in the Word], there the angels do not perceive bread but instead of bread instantly they perceive celestial love and things that belong to celestial love, which is love to the Lord. And when one reads in the Word of wine they do not perceive wine but instead of wine spiritual love and the things that belong to that love, which is love towards the neighbor. Accordingly, when one reads of pottage or soup they do not perceive pottage or soup but matters of doctrine that are not as yet joined to good, and thus a disordered massing together of them. This shows the essence and character of angels’ thought and perception, and how remote these are from man’s thought and perception. If a person when in a holy frame of mind were to think as they do—such as during the Holy Supper—and instead of bread were to perceive love to the Lord, and instead of wine love towards the neighbor, his thought and perception would then be similar to the angels’, who in that case would draw nearer to him till at length it would be possible for them to share their thoughts with him, though only insofar as good was at the same time present in that person.

AC 3464. When in the Holy Supper he thinks in simplicity of the Lord from the words then used, “This is My body,” and “This is My blood,” the angels with him are in the idea of love to the Lord and charity toward the neighbor; for love to the Lord corresponds to the Lord’s body, and to bread; and charity toward the neighbor corresponds to the blood, and the wine (n. 1798, 2165, 2177, 2187). And because there is such a correspondence, there flows an affection out of heaven through the angels into that holy state in which the man then is, and he receives this affection in accordance with the good of his life.

Questions and Comments

1. What did the Lord mean when He said in John, “this is the bread that came down out of heaven”?
2. In AC 3735.2 it says that when a man thinks of bread in a holy state the angels are affected by it. What can we do to try to enter into a holy state when we say the Lord’s Prayer?
3. It also says that this same conjunction with heaven is made when the Word is read in a holy manner. What does it mean to read the Word in a holy manner?
4. AC 3316 explains a connection with angels that can occur during Holy Supper. Can something similar occur when we say the Lord’s Prayer? If so, what is necessary to facilitate such a connection with angels?

6. Why doesn't the Lord give us more than our daily bread?

Rev. 3:20. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will have supper with him, and he with Me.

Matt. 6:24. No one can serve two lords, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will hold to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.¹

Matt. 12:25. But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said to them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation, and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand.

DP 232. IV. THEREFORE THE LORD ADMITS MAN INTERIORLY INTO THE TRUTHS OF WISDOM AND AT THE SAME TIME INTO THE GOODS OF LOVE ONLY SO FAR AS HE CAN BE KEPT IN THEM RIGHT ON TO THE END OF HIS LIFE. To demonstrate this, it is necessary to proceed by distinct steps for two reasons; one, because it is of importance to human salvation; and the other, because upon a knowledge of this law depends a knowledge of the laws of permission, to be treated of in the next chapter. It is of importance to human salvation, for, as has just been said, he who first acknowledges the Divine things of the Word, and consequently of the Church, and afterwards departs from them, profanes holy things most grievously. Therefore, in order that this interior truth of the Divine Providence may be so revealed that the rational man may see it in his own light, it shall be unfolded in the following order:

1. Evil and good cannot exist together in man's interiors; and consequently neither can the falsity of evil and the truth of good.
2. Good and the truth of good can be introduced by the Lord into man's interiors only so far as the evil and the falsity of evil there have been removed.
3. If good with its truth were introduced there before or in a greater measure than evil with its falsity is removed, man would depart from good and return to his evil.
4. When man is in evil many truths may be introduced into his understanding, and these may be stored up in his memory, and yet not be profaned.
5. The Lord, however, by His Divine Providence takes the greatest care that the will may not receive these [truths] from the understanding sooner or in a greater measure than man as of himself removes evil in the external man.
6. If the will should receive them sooner or in greater measure it would then adulterate the good and the understanding would falsify the truth by mingling them with evils and falsities.

¹ Wealth personified.

7. Therefore the Lord admits man interiorly into the truths of wisdom and into the goods of love only so far as he can be kept in them right on to the end of his life.

Questions and Comments

1. How much is our daily bread?
2. What would happen if we received more than we were ready for spiritually?
3. What is the difference between receiving something in the understanding versus receiving it in the will?
4. Can you look back and see the difference in the daily bread that you are able receive now as opposed to what you may have received as a child or many years ago?