

THE GOLDEN MANNA POT IN THE THRONE.

Clanwilliam (18:00) 2013/06/27

Read: Exodus 16; Hebrews 9:1-5

Sermon: Exodus 16.33,34

Heidelberg Catechism Sunday 50, Q/A 125

Text:

33 And Moses said to Aaron, "Take a pot and put an omer of manna in it, and lay it up before the Lord, to be kept for your generations."

34 As the Lord commanded Moses, so Aaron laid it up before the Testimony, to be kept.

Beloved congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ

1. INTRODUCTION

In the forty days between the resurrection and the ascension of our Saviour He appeared at various occasions to them and discussed matters about the Kingdom of God with them.

This year we celebrate ascension on 4 May

This morning the sermon focuses on the matters of the Kingdom from the fourth supplication of the *Our Father*.

2. THE BIBLE IS NOT ONLY THE PSALMS AND NEW TESTAMENT.

There are people of the opinion that the Old Testament is superfluous – all that is important is the New Testament and ... maybe still read the Psalms, but not singing it!

When a person occupies a new house or buys a new car – according to their reasoning – then the old has been sold and is no longer yours and thus no longer of any importance to you.

According to this reasoning the Book of the Covenant (written by God Himself on two slabs of stone) and again reconfirmed in Deuteronomy no longer needs to be read during the worshipping service.

This argument however is not relevant to the Holy Word of God.

The Old Testament (or Covenant we attentively listened to this morning is an integral part of the Word of God.

The New Testament is not *another* Covenant, but the old that was renewed. The Old Testament contains the promises of the Covenant and the New Testament is the fulfillment thereof – it is like an old house being renovated by new additions and newly painted: a new house but on the old foundations!

Exodus 16 and Hebrews 9 from which we read this morning richly illustrate that their argument bears no relevance.

Jesus also answered the crowds in Capernaum:

48 *"I am the bread of life.*

49 *"Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead.*

50 *"This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die.*

51 *"I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."*

(John 6:48-51)

3. THE FOURTH SUPPLICATION OF THE OUR FATHER – A MEASURE OF BREAD PER DAY?

As we now are taught in the fourth supplication to pray:

Give us this day our daily bread,

- The Lord Jesus Christ takes us therewith to the throne of God's grace.
- He focuses our eyes on the pot of manna, which is in the throne of God.

Then it is not just a prayer for daily bread, but deals with the *"food that does not decay and gives eternal life"*

Therefore in the Our Father the supplication for bread goes prior to the supplication for forgiveness.

Daily bread belongs with our prayers. Working hands precede folded arms. He who approaches God praying for bread must also with working hands, walk with God.

To earn we first must learn to serve.

Exactly therefore our daily bread belongs with our prayers. However it deals with more than food – it also includes our labour!

In the fourth supplication – as we confess – it deals with our labour and the gifts of God, which without His grace cannot serve to our advantage. On Him alone we must trust to be obedient to the first Commandment: You shall have no other gods before Me. This means:

That I, as sincerely as I desire the salvation of my own soul, avoid and flee from all idolatry, sorcery, soothsaying, superstition, invocation of saints, or any other creatures; and learn rightly to know the only true God; trust in him alone, with humility and patience submit to him; expect all good things from him only; love, fear, and glorify him with my whole heart; so that I renounce and forsake all creatures, rather than commit even the least thing contrary to his will.

4. THE FOURTH SUPPLICATION OF THE OUR FATHER – THE THRONE OF GOD.

To pray means approaching God's throne of mercy with our distress and needs.

In Hebrews 4:14-16 the Scriptures teach us:

14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.

15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.

16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

In the Old Testament the golden Ark was in the Holy of Holies of the Tabernacle and later the Temple, the earthly Throne sat of the Triune God amongst His children of the Covenant.

The Arc of the Covenant, clad with pure gold, with the mercy-seat of solid gold in the Holy of Holies – first in the Tabernacle during the 40 years in the desert and later in the Temple⁴ – was the visible Throne seat of God amongst His Old Testamental children of the Covenant on earth.

5. THE FOURTH SUPPLICATION OF THE OUR FATHER – DARE WE ASK FOR BREAD?

May we now with a prayer for bread, sounding so earthly, approach the throne of grace for help?

Yes – a thousand times Yes!! We may and must ask for daily bread, because it brings rich blessings.

This answer we find in the Arc of the Covenant – about the size of a writing desk – wherein the wonderful meaning of the fourth supplication has already been symbolically taken up.

Together with the two slabs of stone of the Law and the blooming staff of Aaron was also a golden pot containing manna.

Just like the table of the Showbread in the Holy of the Tabernacle and Temple the manna proclaim:

- That the Lord is also God of the bread and cares for His children, especially during times of hardship;
- That God must bless all labour and that He is the Father from Who all good gifts and every perfect gift descend from heaven.
- That He does so for the sakes of Christ – the golden pot of manna stood under the mercy-seat in the Ark. Jesus Christ our Intercessor and Saviour, who by His blood on the cross of Golgotha atoned for our sins, is the MANNA that descended from heaven - the BREAD OF ETERNAL LIFE.
- That God, our Father who is in heaven, grants us our daily bread as a child portion.

6. END

We do not only sit at the table of the Lord during Holy Communion!! In our natural everyday life we are by what we eat and drink at the table of our Father who is in heaven. Our heavenly Father feeds us.

Listen to the words from the mouth of Jesus: (Matthew 6:26-32)

26 *"Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?"*

27 *"Which of you by worrying can add one cubit to his stature?"*

28 *"So why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin;*

29 *"and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.*

30 *"Now if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is, and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will He not much more clothe you, O you of little faith?"*

31 *"Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'"*

32 *"For after all these things the Gentiles seek. For your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things.*

How ungrateful is the child of the Lord that does not pray at the table – “I don’t need to pray for the food, I worked for it!”

Rather send your prayer to the Throne seat of God in the Highest heaven where the pot of manna – the BREAD OF THE LIFE is for your and my sakes.

Ask for bread.

Ask it in childlike humility, full dependency and in still trust.

Know Him in all your ways – also in the small matters – the general – a piece of bread.

He will provide.

AMEN.

Rev. F. Lessing.