

Martin Luther explains in his Small Catechism Give us this day our daily bread. *What does this mean?* God certainly gives daily bread to everyone without our prayers, even to all evil people, but we pray in this petition that God would lead us to realize this and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving. *What is meant by daily bread?* Daily bread includes everything that has to do with the support and needs of the body, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, land, animals, money, goods, a devout husband or wife, devout children, devout workers, devout and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, self-control, good reputation, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like.

We see the need for daily bread demonstrated in the wandering in the wilderness in Exodus 16. After the Israelites are freed from slavery in Egypt, they grumble even despite the wonders done among them as they were miraculously taken out of captivity. **UNGRATEFUL SINNERS SEE THE GLORY OF THE LORD WHEN HE PROVIDES THEM DAILY BREAD, AND THEY GIVE THANKS.**

First, I. Sinners grumble about anything and everything. Our text starts: **“And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness, and the people of Israel said to them, “Would that we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the meat pots and ate bread to the full, for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger.”**

Despite everything that the Lord had done for the Israelites, they still complained. They still grumbled. You would think that because of the wonders of the plagues, the Passover wherein the firstborn of the Egyptians died but the Israelites were saved, and the miraculous parting of the Red Sea—because of all of these things, they would trust Moses and Aaron, but not so.

Moses goes on to explain, **“the LORD has heard your grumbling that you grumble against him—what are we? Your grumbling is not against us but against the LORD.”** When the Israelites grumbled against Moses and Aaron, they were really grumbling against the Lord.

We too grumble. We worry about our daily needs. Let’s review Luther’s list again: food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, land, animals, money, goods, a devout husband or wife, devout children, devout workers, devout and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, self-control, good reputation, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like.

We complain about food prices. We wish we had a better house. Maybe we don’t worry about animals, but we want a new Mustang, Bronco, or Jaguar. Money? Some is good, more is better. We want better bosses, employees, family, friends, and children. Devout and faithful rulers and good government? Please.

When we complain, we understand it's not just an idle thing directed at others or maybe nobody in particular, it too, is a sign that we fail to trust the Lord for our earthly needs. We fail to have faith that the Lord will get us through.

But II. The Lord provides daily bread. Perhaps the biggest miracle of the account of Exodus is that the Lord shows mercy on these ungrateful sinners. **“Then the LORD said to Moses, “Behold, I am about to rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day’s portion every day, that I may test them, whether they will walk in my law or not. On the sixth day, when they prepare what they bring in, it will be twice as much as they gather daily.”**” Not only that, but the Lord provided quail so the Israelites could also have some protein. This miraculous bread is also known as manna. They gathered enough manna to fill a two liter bottle for each person.

Mind you, it was daily bread, not weekly or monthly bread. This was to keep the Israelites trusting the Lord, and maybe the Lord knew that they would waste the bread if He gave it to them a week at a time.

You have been rescued from slavery to sin through Jesus Christ, the bread of life. Your sins have been forgiven, and Jesus lived a perfect life on your behalf. Because of this, Jesus has made atonement with the entire world so that the Father is pleased to give daily bread to all people, both good and bad, both believer and nonbeliever.

And He too gives us daily bread. The Lord could miraculously grant us the entire life’s worth of our income when we turned eighteen, but all of us know that would be a bad idea. We would squander those riches. Plus, the Lord wants to keep us trusting Him.

But what about those who don’t receive their daily bread? Surely people die of starvation daily, and people live in dysfunctional families or oppressive government regimes. A few quick thoughts: first, God is God and we’re not, so ultimately there’s a sense in which we say we don’t know why this is the case.

Second, this life is not our ultimate destination. Our Heavenly Father gave the Israelites just enough food to get by, and it was certainly no feast. They were happy to arrive in the promised land. This life will involve hardships and worries precisely because we look forward to our promised land in the life that is to come.

Third, the Father is creating life in the midst of death. It’s easy to be negative. Take world hunger for example. The U.N. estimates that 25,000 people die of starvation daily. That’s horrible and we wish no people would die of starvation but think of the millions for whom the Lord provides food. The Church has plenty of opportunities to stand in the gap and provide daily needs for the least among us.

Fourth, since Jesus suffered, we never suffer alone. There will come times of hardship, but remember that when we suffer, we never suffer alone.

Finally, **III**. As we see the glory of the Lord in His provision, we give thanks. We have an interesting section of Exodus 16: Moses and Aaron said, “**At evening you shall know that it was the LORD who brought you out of the land of Egypt, and in the morning you shall see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your grumbling against the LORD.**” They shall see the glory of the Lord! Indeed, the glory of the Lord speaks from the cloud to the people of Israel.

To repeat Luther: “but we pray in this petition that God would lead us to realize this [that the Father provides for us] and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.” We see the glory of the Lord as we partake of Christ’s true body and blood in with and under bread and wine, and in this meal we feast on the living bread from heaven, and it helps open our eyes to the glory of the Lord all around us.

In fact, the Lord’s Supper is sometimes called the Eucharist which means thanksgiving. The Lord fights complaining with thanksgiving, and as we are fed by the Word and Sacrament, the Lord opens our eyes to see how much we truly have. He gives us the strength to endure suffering in the areas of our life in which we are lacking, and we can praise the Lord and share the wonders of His love to others as we too wander through this desert drear awaiting our promised land in the resurrection of the body and the life of the world to come.