

Matthew 6:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Give us this day our daily bread.

Analysis

The prayer shifts from God-centered to human-need petitions: 'Give us this day our daily bread' (Greek: τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον, 'our bread, the daily'). The word ἐπιούσιον (epiousios) is rare, possibly meaning 'daily,' 'necessary for existence,' or 'for the coming day.' This petition acknowledges complete dependence on God's provision, echoing manna in the wilderness (Exodus 16) which was gathered daily. 'This day' emphasizes present trust rather than anxious accumulation. 'Bread' represents all physical necessities, not luxury. This simple request teaches humble dependence and gratitude for basic provision.

Historical Context

In agrarian first-century Palestine, daily bread was literal concern for most people living subsistence-level existence. Crop failures, Roman taxation, and economic exploitation made food security precarious. Day laborers (Matthew 20:1-16) literally depended on daily wages for daily bread. Jesus' teaching against anxiety (6:25-34) follows this prayer, reinforcing trust in daily provision. Early Christians practiced communal sharing (Acts 2:44-45), living out this prayer's economics of sufficiency rather than surplus.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does praying for daily bread challenge our culture's emphasis on accumulation and self-sufficiency?
2. What does this petition teach about appropriate versus anxious concern for physical needs?
3. In what ways does dependence on God for daily provision foster gratitude and trust?

Interlinear Text

τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δὸς ἡμῖν σήμερον.
G3588 bread our G3588 daily Give us this day
G740 G2257 G1967 G1325 G2254 G4594

Additional Cross-References

Proverbs 30:8 (Parallel theme): Remove far from me vanity and lies: give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with food convenient for me:

Luke 11:3 (Parallel theme): Give us day by day our daily bread.

Matthew 4:4 (Parallel theme): But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Psalms 34:10 (Parallel theme): The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing.

Isaiah 33:16 (Parallel theme): He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.

Job 23:12 (Parallel theme): Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.

1 Timothy 6:8 (Parallel theme): And having food and raiment let us be therewith content.

2 Thessalonians 3:12 (Parallel theme): Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ, that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread.

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