

Numbers 4:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And upon the table of shewbread they shall spread a cloth of blue, and put thereon the dishes, and the spoons, and the bowls, and covers to cover withal: and the continual bread shall be thereon:

Analysis

The table of showbread's covering required specific items—'dishes, and spoons, and bowls, and covers to cover withal'—all included in transport. The Hebrew *kelav* (its vessels/implements) indicates complete provision. The bread that was continually before the Lord (Exodus 25:30) represented the twelve tribes' constant dependence on God's provision. That it was covered and transported intact teaches that worship continues even during transitions. The church similarly maintains ordinances (Lord's Supper) even during persecution or displacement. Christ, the true Bread (John 6:35), sustains His people constantly.

Historical Context

The showbread (Hebrew *lechem panim*—bread of the Presence) consisted of twelve loaves representing the twelve tribes perpetually before God. Priests ate the old loaves when replacing them weekly (Leviticus 24:5-9). David's eating this bread when fleeing Saul (1 Samuel 21:6) showed that ceremonial law bends for genuine need—a principle Jesus cited (Matthew 12:3-4) when criticized for Sabbath activity.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. How does the continuous showbread teach that worship must persist through all circumstances?
2. What does Christ as the true Bread of Life mean for daily spiritual sustenance?
3. How do we maintain faithful ordinances even during church disruption or persecution?

Interlinear Text

וְעַל	שֻׁלְחָן	הַפֶּנִּי	יִפְרְשׁוּ	בְּגָד	תְּכֵלֶת
H5921	And upon the table	of shewbread	they shall spread	a cloth	of blue
	H7979	H6440	H6566	H899	H8504
וַיָּנֶחַ	אֶת	הַקְּעֻרֹת	וְאֶת	הַכַּפֹּת	וְאֶת
and put	H5921	H853	H853	and the spoons	H853
H5414		H7086		H3709	
וְהַמִּנְקִי	וְאֶת	קֹשׁוֹת	הַנִּסְכִּי	וְלֶחֶם	הַתָּמִיד
and the bowls	H853	and covers	to cover withal	bread	and the continual
H4518		H7184	H5262	H3899	H8548
עַל	יְהִי:				
H5921	H1961				