

Thanksgiving – Psalm 136 – Daily Bread

S.R. Psalm 136:24 - 26

11 - 29 – 2020

Introduction

- A. Remember the first verse of Psalm 136, we began this evaluation last week.
 - 1. “Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever.”
 - 2. The steadfast love, remember, is the *hesed*—the covenant-keeping, faithful, loyal love of God for His people.
- B. And then we’ve come to verse 25 in our journey through this psalm:
 - 1. Give thanks to the Lord he who gives food to all flesh,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
- C. Before the universe was spoken into existence God planned to provide food for all His creatures great and small.
 - 1. Genesis 1 – 2
 - 2. Genesis 9:3-4 After the flood meat was added to the human diet
 - 3. Psalm 104:27 – 28 “These all (cf. vs 21 – 26) land and sea creatures and humans) look to you, to give them their food in due season. 28 When you give it to them, they gather it up; when you open your hand, they are filled with good things.”

I. God Provides Our Daily Bread

- A. Psalm 145:15–16 tells us, “The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing.”
- B. **Our most basic needs are met by a faithful, covenant-keeping God, our food is a gift from Him, our other basic creature needs, the things He provides for our comfort, for our flourishing, for our enjoyment, these are gifts from a good God.**
 - 1. Acts 14:17, “He did good (remember we said the Lord is good? He is good and He does good. The Lord did good) by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.”
 - 2. God is involved in that whole process of sending the rain that brings the fruitful seasons—and somehow the rain gets to the ground, gets to the crops, and the next thing we know it’s on our dinner table.
- C. Now, people who grow up in farming or agrarian cultures, knew it didn’t just happen that way.

1. But many live in cities and suburban areas today, we don't really see the farming process. We just see it come to our tables.
 2. "Why don't they get their chickens at Kroger like the rest of us?"
 3. But God is not only involved in sending the rain and causing the crops to grow, but He's also the one who gets the food to us and then satisfies our hearts with food and gladness.
- D. This is a personal God. This is a powerful God who is intimately and intricately involved in the details of our lives.
1. Psalm 37: 25, "I have been young, and now I am old, yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken or his children begging for bread."
- E. Why then is there hunger in this world?
1. And why are there people whose needs are not met?
 2. Why are there famines and droughts?
 3. Why are there whole areas of the world where people are chronically underfed?
 4. Unsure regarding answers to all the above questions but what I do know is the Scripture says that those who trust in the Lord, He will meet their needs.
- F. And yet we see that in times in Israel's history, God did withhold food from them.
1. Deuteronomy 8:3 "He caused you to hunger—(He caused you to hunger.)—that He might let you know that **man does not live by bread alone** but by every word that comes from the mouth of God."
 2. So there are purposes of God that are bigger than our immediate needs
 3. **We lift our eyes up to Him, as we look to Him, He has promised He will meet our needs. He feeds not just our bodies, but He feeds our souls, our hearts with His steadfast love.**

II. God Provides:

- A. Psalm 36: 7: "How precious is your steadfast love, O God! (Your *hesed*, Your covenant-keeping love.) The children of mankind feast on the abundance of your house, and you give them drink from the river of your delights."
- B. More than physical food and drink under consideration.
 1. I think the psalmist is talking about God meeting the deepest needs of our souls, the longings of our hearts with Himself.
 2. He is a generous, grace-filled God.
- C. So we say, "Give thanks to the Lord he who gives food to all flesh, for his steadfast love endures forever." (Psalm 136:25)
- D. New Testament examples demonstrate God's abundant provision.

1. When Jesus came to this earth, He was God in the flesh, God-descending, God-condescending, to become a man, to take on human flesh, human limitations, to become one of us.
2. He taught His disciples to pray: “Our Father in heaven, Give us this day, our daily bread.”
3. And He told them, “Don’t worry about what you’re going to eat. Trust Me.”

III. Luke 12:22 – 32

- A. “Therefore I tell you, [Jesus said], do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat, nor about your body, what you will put on. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them” (vv. 22–24).
- B. God once used ravens to feed His prophet. God feeds the ravens.
- C. But then Jesus says, “God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! And do not seek what you are to eat and what you are to drink, nor be worried” (v. 29).
- D. Don’t be anxious. Don’t be worried. That’s easier said than done, isn’t it?
 1. We find ourselves thinking about retirement.
 2. “How are we going to be provided for?”
 3. How are we going to get a house?
 4. How are we going to deal with this house we have? How are the kids’ college going to be paid for?
 5. We need these things, but Jesus said, “Don’t be anxious about them. Don’t be worried about them.” Why?
- E. For all the nations of the world seek after these things, and your Father knows that you need them. Instead, seek his kingdom, and these things will be added to you. (vv. 30–31)
- F. Jesus reminds us Luke 12:32, “Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom.”
- G. **The kingdom!** He’s saying, **“God’s going to give you the most important thing, and everything you need is going to be encompassed in that.”**
 1. So you’re spending your life, worrying, and your anxiety, and your sleepless nights, trying to figure out how you’re going to get your next meal. And Jesus says, “You’re looking at something too small.”
 2. God knows you need those things. So seek for His kingdom—for what honors Him, for His reign and rule in this world, for your heart to be in accord with His. And “don’t be afraid, little flock, for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom”—everything you need and so much more.

3. “Give thanks to the Lord he who gives food to all flesh.” Why? “For his steadfast love endures forever.”
- H. Jesus not only told them not to worry about food, but He demonstrated that He was God in the flesh. In the New Testament gospels through the supernatural provision of food—even as God has supernaturally provided food for His people in the Old Testament.

IV. Feeding the 5,000. (Matthew 14:14 – 21)

- A. When he went ashore he saw a great crowd, and he had **compassion** on them and healed their sick. Now when it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a desolate place, and the day is now over [everything is closed up if there were anything]; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves."
- B. He said, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." They said to him, "We have only five loaves here and two fish." And he said, "Bring them here to me." Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass, and taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing. (vv. 16–19)
- C. Jesus realized where food came from. He realized that God in heaven is the Giver of every good gift—that He sends the rain, He makes the crops to grow, and He gives us food to nourish us and to bring gladness to our hearts. He thanked God for this provision.
- D. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children. (vv. 19–21)
- E. And you’re worried about what you’re going to feed your family tonight!
 1. But you say, “But what about next week?”
 2. It’s not next week. “Give us this day our daily bread.”
 3. “Give thanks to the Lord he who gives food to all flesh.”
- F. Now, I’m not being glib about this. I don’t want to diminish a serious financial situation that you may find yourself in. And God can use different means. He sent ravens to feed His prophet. He rained bread from heaven on the Israelites. Maybe He’ll use somebody in your church family to meet your needs as a widow or as a single mom. God has ways of providing.
- G. And we are to be generous. That’s one of the great means through which God provides, because we’re commanded to be generous and to share what we have with others. But there are so many means God can use. He will not forsake His own people. His covenant-keeping, *hesed* love endures forever.

V. John chapter 21. Jesus Prepares Breakfast

- A. The scene is after the resurrection. Early one morning Jesus appeared to His disciples on the shore. They were out on the lake. They had been fishing all night. They hadn't caught anything. That was their career. They had been a dismal failure that night. And here's Jesus standing on the shore. He calls out to them in their boat, tells them to cast out their net on the other side. You know the story. They end up with this huge, boat-sinking, net-breaking load of fish.
- B. John 21:9 "When they got out on land, they saw a charcoal fire in place, with fish laid out on it, and bread."
- C. They had just caught all these fish, after a night of catching nothing. So Jesus does two miracles. One, He loads up their net with fish from the sea. But then they get to the shore, and Jesus has fish already cooking over the fire. How did He do this? He's God! He gives food to all flesh.
- D. He had fish laid out on the fire and bread. Jesus said to them, "Come and have breakfast."
 - 1. "Come and have breakfast." He cared about their physical needs, but He cared mostly about them knowing He was the God who would meet all of their needs.
 - 2. Jesus came and took bread and gave it to them, and so with the fish. (v. 13)
- E. "Give thanks to the Lord he who gives food to all flesh, for his steadfast love endures forever."
 - 1. Jesus gives food to all flesh, but His provision in those instances points out something even more astonishing.

VI. Jesus – the Bread from Heaven

A. (John 6:30 - 40)

- 1. Jesus said, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." (John 6:32 – 33)
- B. All that provision of bread back in Genesis and Exodus and Numbers and Kings and Chronicles, all that provision of food in the gospels—Jesus feeding the multitudes—**all this is intended to point people to the Bread from heaven who is Jesus, who gives life to the world.**
- C. Well, of course, they had no clue what He was talking about. "They said to him, 'Sir, give us this bread always.'" (6:34)
- D. Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst." (John 6:35)
 - 1. Not only does He give us bread for our physical needs, but He is the Bread who fills our souls. You are what you eat. You cannot live without eating. We cannot live without Jesus. And as we partake of Him by faith, our souls are fed, and we have life.

2. **We have no life apart from Him.** If you don't eat, ever, you die. If you don't feed that newborn baby, it dies. If our souls are not fed, we die.
- E. So how do we live? How do we live eternally? How do we have bread so that we never are hungry again? How do we have water that our thirst will always be quenched? Jesus said, "He who believes in Me. I am the bread of life. I am the living water." It's all meant to point our hearts to Him.
- F. Even that Old Testament verse we've been looking at: "Give thanks to the Lord he who gives food to all flesh, for his steadfast love endures forever."
- G. You see, that Old Testament psalm was pointing to Jesus. He is the food given for the life of the world. He is the steadfast love of the Lord that endures forever.
- H. How is that steadfast, covenant-keeping love expressed? He gives Himself as food and water for hungry, thirsty hearts.
- I. Thinking about Bread of Life for 2021: Face to Face – Kenneth Boa
 1. The Attributes of God
 2. The Works of God
 3. My Relationship to God
 4. Cultivating the Character of God Within Me.
 5. My Relationship to Others

VII. Just before going to the cross, you remember how Jesus celebrated the Passover in the Upper Room with His disciples. And Matthew 26 says, "As they were eating, Jesus took bread."

- A. Jesus took bread, and after blessing it, broke it and gave it to His disciples, "Take, eat; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, ["Give thanks to the Lord he who gives food to all flesh." And when He had given thanks] he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, for this is **my blood of the covenant**, which is poured out for many ["My blood is shed for many."] for the forgiveness of sins." (Matt 26:26–28)
- B. Psalm 136: 25 "Give thanks to the Lord he who gives food to all flesh, for his steadfast love endures forever"?
- C. **The food God gives us is Jesus! He is the ultimate expression of the steadfast love of God that endures forever. So give thanks to the Lord!**
- D. Looking at Matthew 26, at the Last Supper, verse 30 tells us, "And when they had sung a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives."
- E. Picture this scene where Jesus gave them the bread, gave them the cup, said, "This is My body; broken for you; this is My blood shed for you,. Eat of it. Drink of it." And then they **sang a hymn**. And they went out to the Mount of Olives where Jesus would be betrayed and arrested and taken away to be crucified.
- F. Psalm 136—you say, "What does that have to do with that passage in Matthew?"

1. Psalm 136 is known as the Great Hallel - of the Jewish hymnal, "The Great Psalm of Praise." It has traditionally been sung or recited at the end of the Jewish Passover meal, after the Lesser Hallel, which is psalms 113 to 118, a number of shorter psalms.
 2. God's steadfast love noted in Psalm 113 – 118.
 - a. Psalm 115:1; 117:2
 - b. Psalm 118: 1 "Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his **steadfast love** endures forever! 2 Let Israel say, "His **steadfast love** endures forever." 3 Let the house of Aaron say, "His **steadfast love** endures forever." 4 Let those who fear the LORD say, "His **steadfast love** endures forever." 29 Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; for his **steadfast love** endures forever!"
 3. So they have the Passover meal. During which they sing the Lesser Hallel, and then in conclusion, they sing the Great Hallel, "The Great Psalm of Praise," Psalm 136.
- G. Psalm 136 may have been the hymn they sang in Matthew 26:30.
1. Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, [they might have sung],
for his steadfast love [His *hesed*] endures forever.
Give thanks to the Lord he who gives food to all flesh,
for his steadfast love endures forever.
 2. Can you hear the disciples singing that? Can you hear Jesus singing it with them, knowing that He is the Food, the Bread, the Wine given up for the salvation of the world?
- H. **Jesus feeds us with Himself, the living Bread. And for those who have partaken of Jesus by faith, who feast on Him, who feed on Him, Jesus has promised a final banquet where God will give us the finest food we can possibly imagine.**
- I. The Lord of hosts will make a feast.
- J. Just imagine the LORD of hosts, Lord God of heaven and earth, making for all peoples of the earth a feast. It's prophesied about in Isaiah, (cf. 25:6) and then we read about it in Revelation chapter 19:
1. "Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb" (vv. 7–9).
 2. It's a wedding feast, and we're the Bride, and we're invited. And our Father is the one who's preparing this feast for us.
- K. "Give thanks to the Lord, He who gives food to all flesh, for his steadfast love endures forever."
- L. And then verse 26, the last verse of this psalm: "Give thanks to the God of heaven, for his steadfast love endures forever."

M. The **God of Heaven**. This is the first time **this name** for God appears in the Old Testament. He is not just the God of Israel. He is the **God of heaven**. The God of all peoples. The God of heaven and earth. The God who will invite all peoples to a feast for the Bride of His Son.

VIII. Everything God does in the lives of His people, everything God does in your life, is grounded in and governed by His steadfast, loyal, unchanging love.

- A. Trust Him! Give thanks to the Lord for He is good, (say it with me), **for His steadfast love endures forever.**
- B. And, Oh, Father, how we bless Your holy name. You are good. You love Your people with a steadfast loyal, faithful, unchanging, eternal love.
- C. I pray that as we go about our lives, we eat our meals, we feed those in our families, we do the every-day things that embodied creatures do and that we need, may we continually lift our eyes up to You and give You thanks.
- D. May we every week, every day, "Give thanks to the Lord for You are good, and Your steadfast love endures forever."
- E. John 6:40 "For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day."