

The Park Church
Adult Study Group
“Praying the Lord’s Prayer”
Rev. Wayne E. Gustafson, D.Min.

Session 5 – “The Blessings of Earthiness: The Next Step”
March 9, 2008

Questions and Comments from last class

Recap: “In the first half of the prayer we remember the One and feel our blessing from the cosmos. In the second half, we begin a new cycle of blessing, but in an even more embodied and practical way: we face each other and remember the divine Many.”

Hawvlan lachma d’sunqanan yaomana

Give us this day our daily bread.

What does this line in English mean to you?

Let’s start with the word “lachma”

L- (In Malkuta, L refers to an extension of power, perhaps in the sense of fuel)

-KhM – a sense of inner-ness

-A – expands to connect with Sacred Unity

So here, Lachma might be seen as fuel that connects the sense of “I am” with the Sacred Unity (God)

Lachma is closely related to Hochma, which means wisdom.

HO- is a breath of individuality.

The connection between Hochma and Lachma invites us to look at all the ways the individual is brought to wholeness and is connected to the Unity. Whatever nourishes the development of the individual and nourishes the connection with the Unity is the “bread” that we need.

Another way of saying this is that we ask for that nourishment in bread and wisdom that allows us to grow into individuals who are created in the image of God. Those individuals are, then, capable of entering into intimate relationship with God. So think about all the kinds of nourishment you need: Physical, Relational, Emotional, Rational, and Spiritual, and you get a sense of this line of the prayer.

There is no sense that God will not make the nourishment available, but when we ask, perhaps that means we are prepared to receive and make use of the nourishment.

Lachma/hochma not only connects us to God, but God is the wisdom/bread also. When we receive the bread and insight we need, we are also receiving God.

Sunqanan – Refers to needs

The prayer is asking that we be given what we need, not what we desire or demand.

Hawvlan – “can mean ‘give’, ‘humanly generate’, ‘produce with life and soul’, or ‘animate with fruit’.

Yaomana – is a variation on the Hebrew word for day (iom) and seems to have the sense of today or in this moment.

Putting these last three together gives the sense of receiving what we need for the next step, - ‘just food and/or understanding for this moment.’”

There is an emphasis on what we need “today”. There are several places in the Gospel where Jesus teaches us not to hoard, rather trust that what we need each day will be available. Of course, when some hoard, others go hungry. Even wisdom can be hoarded if we do not share what we know and experience with others. (Evangelism?)

Mystical Prayers

1. **Support** – Lying down, standing, or walking, pay attention to how you experience the earth supporting you. How much of a “footprint” do you leave on the earth by how you live?
2. **Relational Support** – (done with a partner) – begin as in #1, feeling the support of the earth. The second person sits at the feet of the one reclining and for a few moments lifts one of the other’s leg, sharing in the support of the person with the earth.
Notice the feeling after the leg is put back down. Are there any differences in sensation between the side that was lifted and the one that was not.
Change Places and repeat.
3. **Personal Growth and Needs** - Intone *lachma* (la – ch – ma) – feel it inside – notice how it helps focus on what you are working through, step by step, and what you need for this moment, and for “the next step”.

Reading List

Prayers of the Cosmos: Meditations on the Aramaic Words of Jesus, Translation and Commentary by Neil Douglas-Klotz, Harper San Francisco, 1990.

The Hidden Gospel: Decoding the Spiritual Message of the Aramaic Jesus, Neil Douglas-Klotz, Quest Books, Wheaton, IL, 1999.

5. The Blessings Of Earthiness: The Next Step

Grant what we need each day in bread and insight:
subsistence for the call of
growing life.

Give us the food we need to grow
through each new day,
through each illumination of life's needs.

Let the measure of our need be earthiness:
give all things simple, verdant,
passionate.

Produce in us, for us, the possible:
each only-human step toward home
lit up.

Help us fulfill what lies within
the circle of our lives: each day we ask
no more, no less.

Animate the earth within us: we then
feel the Wisdom underneath
supporting all.

Generate through us the bread of life:
we hold only what is asked to feed
the next mouth.

Grant what we need each day in bread and insight.