

The Importance of Food Fellowship

- I. Food in ancient times was not merely means of sustaining life
 - A. Significance in social and economic life
- II. Bond of fellowship
 - A. Almost every pact or covenant sealed with common meal
 - 1. Gen. 18:1-8, 3 men come to Abraham in the heat of the day. He prepares a meal for them.
 - 2. Gen. 19:1-3, Two angels come to Sodom in the evening and Lot prepares a feast for them.
 - 3. Gen. 31:54 - Jacob and Laban, in spite of mutual suspicion, concluded their boundary treaty with a meal that lasted all night.
 - 4. Josh. 9:3-15, Joshua and his men made protective treaty with the Gibeonites. Even though Joshua was tricked, he did not break it, because they sealed it with wine and bread.
 - 5. 2 Sam. 9:7ff, Mephibosheth, adopted by David, thus allowed to eat at the king's table, like one of his sons. (2 Samuel 9:7 NCV) *David said to him, "Don't be afraid. I will be kind to you for your father Jonathan's sake. I will give you back all the land of your grandfather Saul, and you will always eat at my table."*
 - 6. Exodus 24:9 ff, At Sinai, Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and 70 of the elders went up, and they saw the God of Israel... they beheld God, and ate and drank." - They sealed a covenant with God. (Exodus 24:9-11 NCV) *Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and seventy of the older leaders of Israel went up the mountain ¹⁰ and saw the God of Israel. Under his feet was a surface that looked as if it were paved with blue sapphire stones, and it was as clear as the sky! ¹¹ These leaders of the Israelites saw God, but God did not destroy them. Then they ate and drank together.*
- III. Think of the three great events of Israel:
 - A. Feast of Unleavened Bread (Passover) (beginning of wheat harvest, celebration of salvation from Egypt.)
 - B. Feast of Weeks (Pentecost) (End of grain harvest, celebration of giving of law at Sinai.)
 - C. Feast of Booths or tabernacles (wondering in the wilderness) (end of wine harvest)
 - D. 4th was called a Feast - Atonement - but is actually a Fast
- IV. Covenant of salt: loyalty
 - A. Mk. 9:50, in the discussion of salt and it's value, "Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another." = be mutually loyal to each other.
 - B. Col. 4:6, "Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer every one."
- V. Refusal to eat - mark of anger
 - A. 1 Sam. 20:34, Jonathan learned that Saul was determined to kill David, so he rose and left, not eating. (1 Samuel 20:34 NRSV) *Jonathan rose from the table in*

fierce anger and ate no food on the second day of the month, for he was grieved for David, and because his father had disgraced him.

VI. Gifts of food:

- A. Not merely a matter of form - sealing personal and communal relationships.
- B. Jacob and his sons on visiting Egypt: *"take some of the choice fruits of the land in your bags, and carry down to the man a present, a little balm and a little honey,, gum, myrrh, pistacio nuts, and almonds."* (Gen. 43:1-11)
- C. Jacob on meeting Esau after running from one another, - sent ahead a gift of goats, sheep, cows, bulls and asses (Gen. 32:3-21)
- D. When Saul and his servant were looking for lost asses, they decided to consult the seer Samuel. (1 Samuel 9:7 NRSV) *Then Saul replied to the boy, "But if we go, what can we bring the man? For the bread in our sacks is gone, and there is no present to bring to the man of God. What have we?"*

VII. NT.

- A. Mk. 2:16, Jesus eating with tax collectors and sinners, after call of Matthew.
- B. Luke 19, after Zacchaeus meets Jesus, invited him to his house.
- C. Matt. 22:1-10 (Lk. 14:15ff) Parable of the marriage feast.
 - 1. Tells of those who refused the Kings invitation (insult) or who came with the wrong dress (lack of respect)
- D. Jesus describes heaven, "I tell you, many will come from east and west and sit at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven."
- E. Last Supper (Matt. 26:29, Mk. 14; Lk. 22) *"I will not drink again until I drink it new with you in my Father's Kingdom."*
- F. After instituting the Lord's Supper, to the 12, *"As my Father appointed a kingdom for me, so do I appoint for you that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel."*

VIII. When Jesus invites you to his meal, you should not consider this an insignificant invitation.

- A. We have trivialized the Lord's Supper into a ritual with a miniscule portion of juice and cracker. In doing so, we have also trivialized the significance of our meal with the Savior.