

GIVING THANKS

Did you realize that saying a prayer of thanks to God before you eat a meal was a Biblical practice? Jesus gave us that example when He fed a multitude of **5,000 men**, plus women and children. This miracle is present in all 4 gospels (Matt 14:13-21, Mark 6:31-44, Luke 9:10-17, and John 6:5-15). It is also called the miracle of the 5 loaves and 2 fish:

Matt 14:13-21 When Jesus heard of it, he departed thence by ship into a desert place apart: and when the people had heard thereof, they followed him on foot out of the cities.

14 And Jesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and he healed their sick.

15 And when it was evening, his disciples came to him, saying, This is a desert place, and the time is now past; send the multitude away, that they may go into the villages, and buy themselves **victuals**. (or meat, meaning, food in general)

16 But Jesus said unto them, They need not depart; give ye them to eat.

17 And they say unto him,

We have here but **five loaves, and two fishes**.

18 He said, Bring them hither to me.

19 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass, and took the five loaves, and the two fishes, and **looking up to heaven, he blessed**, (He asked God's blessing on the meal. John 6:11 reads "when He had **given thanks**") and brake, and gave the loaves to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

20 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full.

21 And they that had eaten were about **five thousand men**, beside women and children.

In a separate event, Jesus fed **4,000 men**, in addition to women and children, which is also recorded in Matt 15:32-39 and Mark 8:1-9, but not in Luke or John. It is also known as the miracle of the 7 loaves and fish.

Again, Jesus **gave thanks** before the food was distributed by His disciples:

Matt 15:33-37 And his disciples say unto him, Whence should we have so much bread in the wilderness, as to fill so great a multitude?

34 And Jesus saith unto them, How many loaves have ye?

And they said, **Seven, and a few little fishes.**

35 And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the ground.

36 And **he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks,** and brake them, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

37 And they did all eat, and were filled: and they took up of the broken meat that was left seven baskets full.

38 And they that did eat were **four thousand men,** beside women and children.

The Passover reminded Israel of their deliverance from slavery. The 10th plague on Pharaoh was when God did "smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast." Israel had to paint the blood of the lamb over and around their doors so they would be spared, because God had said, "when I see the blood, I will pass over you," (Exo 12:12-13).

Jesus ate the passover with His disciples, and applied the 'elements' (the fruit of the vine drink and the unleavened - flat - bread) to what-it-now-called the **Lord's Supper** (1 Cor 11:20), or the **Lord's Table** (1 Cor 10:21) to commemorate (that is, to have a ceremony to honor and remember) the New Testament in Jesus' blood.

Luke 22:13-20 And they went, and found as he had said unto them: and they made ready **the passover.**

14 And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him.

15 And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat **this passover** with you before I suffer:

16 For I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

(Luke 22:) 17 And he took the cup, and gave thanks, (Greek word <eucharisteo> meaning 'thanksgiving' from which comes the word 'Eucharist')

and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves:

18 For I say unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come.

19 And he took bread, and gave thanks, (Greek <eucharisteo>) and brake it, and gave unto them, saying,

This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

20 Likewise also the cup after supper, saying,

This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.

The 'Eucharist' is also called 'Holy Communion' and is considered a 'sacrament' which is a formal, customary observance or procedure focused on what God does or an 'ordinance' concentrated on what Christians do.

In the context of 'the communion of the cup and the bread' Paul wrote:

1 Cor 10:15-22 I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say.

16 The cup of blessing which we bless,

is it not the communion (Greek word <koinonia> also translated 'fellowship', 'communication', 'distribution', 'contribution' and 'communicate') of the blood of Christ?

The bread which we break,

is it not the communion (Greek word <koinonia>) of the body of Christ?

17 For we being many are one bread, and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.

18 Behold Israel after the flesh:

are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?

19 What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing?

20 But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship (Greek word <koinonos> like 'partner') with devils.

21 Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.

22 Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?

Continuing on notice the **surroundings** of the next verse

which is drinking and eating at the Lord's table / supper / communion

and concerning eating food that was sacrificed to idols,

including what-for-thousands-of-years-used-to-be 'UNCLEAN' meats to Jews,

but now since God told Peter to 'rise, kill, and eat' (Acts 10:9-16)

meat that had been cleansed by God, and was now 'LAWFUL' to eat:

1 Cor 10:23-31 All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.

24 Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth.

25 Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, that **eat**,

asking no question for conscience sake:

26 For the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof.

27 If any of them that believe not bid you to a feast, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, **eat**, asking no question for conscience sake.

28 But if any man say unto you, **This is offered in sacrifice unto idols**, **eat not** for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof:

29 Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other:

for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?

30 For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of

for that for which I **give thanks?** (Greek <eucharisteo>)

31 **Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.**

An idol is nothing, but everyone doesn't know that (1 Cor 8:4-6), so we ought to be careful not to defile the weak conscience of our brethren:

1 Cor 8:8 But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.

9 But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak.

1 Cor 8:12 But **when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.**

Whether one eateth meat or eateth not, neither are not to argue with each other, because God hath received them both as His servants (Rom 14:1-7):

Rom 14:13-15 Let us not therefore judge one another any more:
but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock
or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

14 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus,
that there is nothing unclean of itself:
but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.
15 But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

We are not to treat each other with partiality (1 Tim 5:12):

Rom 12:10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love;
in honour preferring one another;

We are free to eat any kind of meat if we do so with **thanksgiving**:

1 Tim 4:1-5 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits,
and doctrines of devils;

- 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy;
having their conscience seared with a hot iron;
- 3 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats,
which God hath created to be received
with thanksgiving (Greek <eucharistia>)
of them which believe and know the truth.
- 4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused,
if it be received with thanksgiving: (Greek <eucharistia>)
- 5 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

In the apostle Paul's experience, he **thanked God** for food and drink:

Acts 27:34-35 Wherefore I pray you to take some meat: for this is for your health: for there shall not an hair fall from the head of any of you.

35 And when he had thus spoken,
he took bread,
and gave thanks (Greek <eucharisteo>) to God
in presence of them all: and when he had broken it, he began to eat.

We are exhorted to praise God cheerfully for Who He is

for His greatness and for His power:

Psa 100:1-5 Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands.

2 Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

3 Know ye that the LORD he is God:

it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves;

we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

4 **Enter into his gates with thanksgiving,**

and into his courts with praise:

be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

5 For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting;

and his truth endureth to all generations.

We are to be thankful to God and for each other (Col 1:3, 1 Thess 1:2):

Col 3:12-17 Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering;

13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

14 And above all these things put on charity,

which is the bond of perfectness.

15 And let the peace of God rule in your hearts,

to the which also ye are called in one body;

and **be ye thankful.**

16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

17 And **whatsoever ye do in word or deed,**

do all in the name of the Lord Jesus,

giving thanks to God and the Father by him.

We are to be thankful to God for everything He allows or brings into our life:

1 Thess 5:18 **In every thing give thanks:**

for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

This is David Dowell saying, "Think about it!"