

Biblical Meal

A Liturgy to worship with each other & share the midday meal...

Music

Opening Nobody will stay hungry today.
Because today we celebrate
the meeting with the Lord.
Today we renew our commitment
as people of God.
Nobody will stay hungry.
Amen.

Song

Prayer **God of creation, the earth is yours.
And we thank you for all its beauty and goodness,
its rich and overflowing provision,
the food we eat, the air we breath,
the friends we love and so much more...
But then we have claimed this earth for our own,
plundered its beauty for profit,
grabbed its resources for ourselves.
God of creation, forgive us.
May we no longer abuse your trust,
but care gently and with justice for your earth
and all its creatures. Amen.**

Song

Stories of Meals... (taken from: The 21st Century Children's Bible)

Water and bread in the desert (Ex 15)

The people of Israel had just escaped from Egypt.
Dancing and singing they praised God. But a few days later the mood in the Israelite camp changed. Moses had led them into the desert. They went for three days without finding water. When at last they found some, it was undrinkable.
The people complained, and Moses spoke to God.
"Throw that piece of wood into the water," said God. "Then it will taste sweet."
Moses obeyed God and the people drank.
They continued to travel through the desert. It was hot and tiring.
There was no food and little water.
"We wish we had died in Egypt!" the people said to Moses. "At least we had plenty of food there."
"Tell everyone that I have heard how much they grumble," God said to Moses. "I will make bread rain from the sky, and I will provide quail for my people to eat. There will be enough for everyone."
That evening, the Israelite camp was full of quail, and the ground was covered in a thin layer of white flakes. It looked like frost. It was the bread God had promised, and it tasted like wafers made of honey. The people called the bread "manna".

The widows oil (1 Kings 17)

A terrible famine haunted Israel and its people.
"Go to Zarephath," said God to Elijah. "A woman who lives there will provide you with food."
When Elijah reached the gates of the town he saw a woman gathering sticks for firewood. "Please, will you give me some bread and water?" he asked.

"I don't have enough for my own family," she replied. "This wood is to cook one last meal for me and my son before we die."

"Don't be afraid," said Elijah. "Make your meal, only give me some bread as well. God promises that if you do this you will have flour and oil for as long as the famine lasts."

The woman did as Elijah asked. Her flour and oil never ran out.

And Elijah stayed there for many days.

Food for all (John 6)

One day Jesus went across Lake Galilee and up into the hills with his friends. A huge crowd followed him there, so he taught them about God's kingdom.

Jesus looked at all the people. There were more than 5,000 men, women and children. They were hungry and they had not eaten because they had been listening to him.

"Do you know where we could buy some bread?" Jesus asked his friend Philip. "It would cost a fortune to buy enough bread for all these people," answered Philip.

Then Andrew, another disciple, noticed a boy in the crowd who was clutching five small barley rolls and two fish. He brought the boy to Jesus. "This lad has some food," he said, "but it won't go very far!"

"Ask the people to sit down," said Jesus.

The people sat on the grass. Jesus picked up one of the rolls. "Thank you, God, for this food," he said. Then he began to break it into pieces, and passed it around the people. He did the same with the fish.

Everyone ate until they were full up. There was plenty of food.

"Pick up what's left," said Jesus to his friends. They collected twelve baskets full of leftover pieces.

Song

Collect & share your thoughts on food or use the text below...

Thoughts on food

In Bible times most people grew and prepared their own food.

Bread was the most important part of any meal, with fruit, vegetables, some cheese or milk, and perhaps a stew made of beans or lentils.

Most people only ate meat on special occasions.

Sharing a meal was a very important part of family or community life; and inviting visitors or people who were journeying to stay at your house and share a meal was a strong tradition carried out by all God's people, however poor.

In Bible times **"to eat bread"** meant to have a meal.

Bread was the most important food for most people and they baked it fresh every day. Poor people used barley flour, those with more money baked with flour from wheat.

Sometimes dough was shaped into rolls or it was cooked flat.

Bread could be made by putting it on flat stones which were heated by an open fire; there were also simple ovens with fire inside, and when the flames had died down and the sides of the oven were hot, balls of dough were placed inside...

Meat Flocks of sheep and goats were kept for their milk, for drinking and for making cheese and yogurt, as well as for their meat.

For most people meat was for special occasions only.

Then it was usually boiled or stewed.

Wine Most water was not safe to drink. So wine was the everyday drink for adults, and milk for children. Most people grew grapevines which they harvested and made into wine.

Fish In New Testament times, people who lived near the Sea of Galilee, like Jesus and his friends, ate fresh fish. Some of the fish were salted to preserve them and then dried. This meant that they could keep it for longer.

Vegetables Lentils, beans, onions, leeks, garlic, cucumbers and avocados were prepared, some cooked, for eating.

Olives This was one of the most important crops. Olives were eaten for food, but the oil was used for lighting, cooking, medicine and skin care.

Fruit In the hot, sunny climate, grapes, figs, dates, mulberries grew well. People ate these fresh or dried them and pressed them into cakes.

Eating and drinking together are s.th. very important in the Bible. The Bible is full of stories of people sharing food – the necessary for life.

Jesus often celebrated meals with his friends, they ate and drank and told their stories. They shared their lives...

That then short before Jesus' death is, how communion came about – a meal to remember Jesus and his way of loving, living and dying...

Christians from now on should show, how life could be on this earth and how the beginning of the kingdom of God felt: And one important thing always was sharing ...

Blessing on the meal

**Bless to us, O God,
each thing our eyes see.
Bless to us, O God,
each sound our ears hear.
Bless to us, O God,
each odour that goes through our nostrils.
Bless to us, O God,
each taste that goes to our lips;
each note that goes to our songs;
each ray that guides our way,
each thing that we pursue.**

Meal

open end...