

COME AND DINE, SAYS JESUS!

John 21:12 Jesus saith unto them, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord.

John 21:13 Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise.

We live in a difficult time. Even people in rich countries are suffering from the combined effects of a war in the Ukraine, such as inflation which affects food and fuel prices. Several people are afraid of the coming winter and how to stay warm. This message is intended to give you hope; Jesus Christ is still our Jehovah Jireh. “And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together” (Gen 22:8). The God who kept us through the difficult months of the Covid-19 virus will also see us through this trial. Amen!

Before his resurrection, the Lord Jesus always catered for the physical needs of his apostles. Now, also, after the resurrection, he is mindful of their hunger. The Lord did not return to feed the multitudes, as he did on so many other occasions, but his chosen disciples because they never followed him for their bellies alone. “Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed” (John 6:27). The Gospel and miracles of Jesus are not for the belly, but the Lord will not forget to feed his chosen few when they labour and catch no fish. Initially, the Lord asked them, “Then Jesus saith unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They answered him, No” (John 21:5). They instantly recognized this voice. It was a repetition of precisely what happened in the beginning the first time they saw Jesus. The lesson is clear: those whom Jesus calls for the Gospel must never forget that our physical needs will only be met when we are in his service.

Psalms 37:3 Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.

Psalms 37:4 Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.

Psalms 37:5 Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.

You see before the Lord could give instructions, challenge Peter to feed his sheep etc., he first must feed them. Certainly, the Lord has many things to say to us all – we must be corrected, instructed, even rebuked, but the Lord Jesus will ensure that we shall be fed. Jesus knows the importance of food and drink to his creation. In fact, the first ever miracle the Lord performed was in the feast of the wedding at Cana. The best thing the bride and bridegroom

did at that wedding was to invite the Lord. He made sure the feast did not end early due to lack of wine. Leave the physical worries to Jesus and just get on with the work! Before the Lord could send them out to feed other sheep, he must first feed his sheep. They had toiled the whole night, they were cold, hungry and very tired. Many centuries earlier, Elijah, too, was defeated, hungry and suicidal. Had he just left Beersheba for Mount Horeb, he would surely have died. But the God who is Jehovah roi saw him and sent his angel with food.

1Kings 19:7 And the angel of the LORD came again the second time, and touched him, and said, Arise and eat; because the journey is too great for thee.

1Kings 19:8 And he arose, and did eat and drink, and went in the strength of that meat forty days and forty nights unto Horeb the mount of God.

Thank God, he does not forsake us. Just as the Lord came back once again after the resurrection to feed his apostles, he returned again to feed them, just as the angel did not leave Elijah but returned the second time. As a mother is persistent and never leaves her sick child, the Lord will ensure we do not die of hunger or thirst. It was only after the Lord fed Elijah and he went to Horeb in the strength of that meat that he questioned him, “And he came thither unto a cave, and lodged there; and, behold, the word of the LORD came to him, and he said unto him, What doest thou here, Elijah?” (I Kings 19:9). Only after the Lord fed the apostles did he begin questioning Peter about his love. “So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs” (John 21:15). How wonderful the Lord is! Now we understand why he takes such good care of his servants – they would soon be called upon to endure great sacrifices and adversities. The labourer is worthy of his wages indeed! “For the scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn. And, The labourer is worthy of his reward” (I Tim 5:18). While this latter scripture is for ministers, it can be extended to all the people of the Lord who labour in some form or fashion for the name of Jesus. The vast majority who ate manna were not ministers.

Neh 9:20 Thou gavest also thy good spirit to instruct them, and withheldest not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst.

Neh 9:21 Yea, forty years didst thou sustain them in the wilderness, so that they lacked nothing; their clothes waxed not old, and their feet swelled not.

Let us remember that despite the murmurings and rebellion of the children of Israel in the wilderness, God never stopped raining down manna from heaven. He never punished any individual or family or tribe by denying them the life-giving food from heaven. Not only did the Lord invite them, kindle the fire and provide the fish miraculously, he also was the waiter.

How humble is the good Lord! “Jesus then cometh, and taketh bread, and giveth them, and fish likewise” (John 21:13). It is indeed a great blessing to let the Lord break the bread of his own word and distribute to us as he seats us around him. Let him take the fish and bread, break them and distribute to us with his own blessed hands. I have preached about this theme before and never tire of the beautiful significance of this passage.

John 21:10 *Jesus saith unto them, Bring of the fish which ye have now caught.*

John 21:11 *Simon Peter went up, and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three: and for all there were so many, yet was not the net broken.*

The great feast consisted of fish that the Lord miraculously provided and the apostles caught from the sea through the command of the Lord. Let us not forget the Lord catches many fish himself without our contribution or knowledge. Consider the likes of Paul whom none could win for the Lord, except Jesus! Jesus will bring his fish to the heavenly banquet in heaven while we will bring the ones we have been given grace to carry to Jesus. What a blessed meeting of the two catches of fish! In conclusion, God will first feed and clothe our hungry, cold and tired bodies before he commissions us to feed the souls of people. He himself came and hosted this breakfast (they toiled the whole night). Not only did he host it, he was the waiter! Jesus can set up a kitchen wherever we are hungry, as he did in the wilderness of Sinai. Once he has fed us, he challenges, instructs, corrects and commissions us. The difficult times we live in and the circumstances that affect the world will not overwhelm us! The Master is calling us to dine with him. He has prepared a miraculous feast for us. Just keep your eyes on his work. Let us determine to bring much fish to the great supper of the Lamb!

Rev 19:9 *And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.*